ENCOUNTER

edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* IRVING KRISTOL

AUGUST 1957. VOL. IX. NO. 2

Published monthly at Panton House 25 Haymarket London SW1
3s. per number Yearly subscription 36s.: U S & Canada $7.00: India 12 rupees
U S and Canadian subscriptions may be entered at British Publications Inc.
30 East 60th Street New York 22

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ILLUSTRATIONS for Stephen Spender's story are by Leonard Rosoman.

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The Victors are Vanquished

A Spanish Testament: 1957

[*Preface by François Bondy*:—When I met Dionisio Ridruejo in Madrid in the spring of 1956 he had just been let out of jail, but he still faced charges of having collaborated with the young writers and students who had only recently risen in revolt against the Falangist officialdom that controlled the student organisations. Ridruejo himself, who is now forty-four, had been an outstanding Falangist leader; but among the young men who had now openly demonstrated their disgust at the régime there was a surprising number of sons of prominent Falangists and, in general, of good families. They were deeply dissatisfied with an order of things that they had no great personal complaint against, but under which they felt themselves stifled. It was obvious to an observer that, from Madrid to Barcelona, from Salamanca to Seville, this "revolt of the young" had aroused the sympathy of all the intellectual circles in Spain. And one has only to look at the petitions in which such Spanish writers as Azorin and Marañon and Cela called for the reinstatement of those students expelled after the university troubles in Barcelona, in order to realise that the intellectuals as a body now feel themselves alienated from Franco's dictatorship.

Ridruejo, whose name has not appeared in the Spanish press for the past twelve years, was one of those to whom the students of Madrid looked for spiritual guidance. He had told them not to be taken in by their own illusions, and had warned them that the Congress of Young Writers for which they were preparing with so much enthusiasm would probably not take place; but nevertheless he did not refuse to help them. The trial of the students in 1956 showed that Franco was sensitive to international public opinion. *Gil Roblès*, leader of the former Catholic Party who had returned from a long voluntary exile, took on the defence of the accused, a defence which turned into an indictment of the régime; but the sentences awarded were relatively light. One had an intimation of the uneasy conscience of a régime which is no longer sure of itself, and which knows that the opposition no longer speaks in the name of the past but of the future.

A year after that, I saw Ridruejo once more. He was to be arrested a fortnight later, along with several other leading intellectual personalities; but in April, when I happened to be in Madrid, there was no sign of this. Several democratic parties had already taken the first open steps towards organising themselves, while printed and mimeographed pamphlets from Catholic, monarchist, and liberal sources were circulating freely. The Falangist Party—which seemed to represent the really totalitarian aspect of the régime—was rapidly losing ground, after having issued a whole series of ultimatums which Franco completely disregarded. It seemed possible that there would be a transition towards a monarchy which would gradually reintroduce certain fundamental liberties. There had been further outbreaks of trouble in the universities, and eighteen students from Barcelona were barred from all Spanish universities. The demonstrations of solidarity with Hungary, which the régime tried to represent as a tribute to a Horthy-style counter-revolution bearing some resemblance to Franco's uprising against the Republic, had been transformed by the students into demands for democracy "for Spain as well as for Hungary." Franco had just dismissed most of his ministers—they were "tired and worn-out" he said in an interview with the *New York Times*—but in several instances they were also vastly richer than when they had started; for in Spain, to be near the seat of power is to have

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access to extremely lucrative business. In the new Government the army occupied a large place—perhaps to compensate it for the loss of Spanish Morocco which it still bitterly regretted. But the key posts were held by the extreme Right-Wing Catholic organisation, "Opus Dei," which had drawn up blacklists against liberal personalities as well as against their works, and was trying to secure the banning of the heretical books of Unamuno and Ortega y Gasset from the libraries, while at the same time preparing to persecute the more liberal Catholic groups.

When I saw Ridruejo for the second time, he had just given to the Cuban journalist, Ortega Sierra, an interview—excerpts from which are herewith presented—which was to appear in the weekly review *Bohemia*. As he had done the year before, the Castilian poet talked to me a great deal about the civil war, for he was still haunted by his memories of it, as by the moral drama he had lived through since. Even while being in opposition, his main concern was not to do anything which might re-open such a terrible breach:

"There we were, facing each other: and on both sides, honest men were working in collaboration with bands of murderers. For us and for them alike, the opposite side did not consist of men but of objects, and their destruction was not a problem. People killed each other with a calm conscience. Yet the murderers on the other side were finally punished, and ours were not. From that comes a deep-seated uneasiness, an obscure feeling of guilt and the bad conscience one sees in so many sons of privileged persons. One should forget past resentments and all desire for vengeance. But justice itself cries out for vengeance. And where is vengeance to stop? We ought to forget, we ought to recognise that circumstances have changed and that we ourselves must and can change. But, in Spain, to change means to dishonour oneself, to be lacking in faithfulness. Between the historical necessity for a new departure, which we all feel, and the moral passion which, in our case, is so near to an elementary instinct, there is no connection."

We spoke also of Garcia Lorca, for Ridruejo had just made a public protest against a version of the poet's death once more put forward in the *Estafeta Literaria*, according to which his murder was merely a local crime instigated by homosexuals.

Thus, all along, Ridruejo has shown himself the very opposite of a conspirator. He has seized every opportunity to make known, both publicly and privately, his opposition sentiments, and he also sent memoranda to Franco for as long as that seemed to be of the slightest use. It is for that reason that I feel able to give this account of our conversation. It was when he realised that to express his viewpoint in Spain itself had become quite impossible, that he decided to give a clear-cut explanation of the reasons for his opposition to the Cuban review. I know that he personally revised this text, and that if it should come to a trial—but will there be a trial?—he would claim full responsibility.

Looking at this man with his haunting memories of the war, I found it difficult to retrace, behind the taut intellectual features, the unlined face of the young helmeted warrior as one sees it in photographs of the period, the one, for example, in which he is standing beside General Yague at the time when the troops were entering conquered Barcelona. There is the same difference between his recent writing (but will his manuscripts survive?) and the Falangist hymn, *"Cara al sol,"* of which he was the author.

Ridruejo, the prisoner of Franco, irresistibly calls to mind Milovan Djilas, the prisoner of Tito. Here are two men, both still young, who threw themselves body and soul into totalitarian movements, two officially decorated "heroes" of the war, two accredited ideologists for their régimes, covered in honour and glory and enjoying the dictator's friendship. Both have radically changed, have turned, as much for moral as for political reasons, against the régimes they helped to create, and have rediscovered through personal experience the meaning of political freedom—which, for those unable to enjoy it, is never a banal idea. Djilas, no longer able to speak in his own country, voiced his criticisms of the new ruling caste in a New York newspaper; Ridruejo, finding himself in the same circumstances, chose a Cuban weekly; and two régimes which would both like to convey to the world an impression of comparative liberalisation both reacted in the same way. The analogy can be carried even further. Yugoslav official circles are trying to make people believe the fable that Djilas is perfectly well and undergoing a favoured form of internment—whereas he is actually in Mitrovica prison, which is unheated in winter, in the same cell he occupied when he was condemned under King Alexander. And because Ridruejo is well known in Paris, the Spanish Embassy there circulated a rumour that he had already been released, whereas in actual fact he has remained in prison and is threatened with deportation to Ifni.

Following his arrest, other highly respected personalities like the Salamanca jurist, Tierno Galvan, were also arrested. It is true that in Spain today, the totalitarian Falange has lost almost all its power. Nevertheless, it is simply

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not possible to detect any liberal virtue in a régime that today imprisons men for giving expression to opinions they have never concealed. The idea that Spain will become more liberal by force of circumstances, and through her increased contact with the outside world, has yet to be proved. What is sure is that the indifference of the democracies to the fate of a man like Ridruejo does not encourage such an evolution, and it is equally certain that the young Spanish intellectuals who look towards the democracies have so far discovered few signs of interest among them, little evidence of solidarity and few reasons for hope.]

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"AT WHAT *point did you decide to go into open opposition to the Franco régime?*"

"My present position—which you have already defined to some extent by your question—is the outcome of a lengthy process. It was in August, 1942, a few months after my return from Russia, where I had taken part in the fighting, that I withdrew from political life by giving up my public functions and renouncing once and for all my status as a militant member of the Falange. My reasons for withdrawing at that time were nevertheless 'Falangist,' deriving as they did from what I have called the 'hypothetical Falange,' which must not be confused with the actual and historical Falange. I considered that the civil war had ended in a fraud, by merely turning upside down, as it were, the result of the elections of February, 1936, from which the Popular Front had emerged triumphant. It was certainly the right-wing elements who 'won' the war. I considered that the 'national revolution' was thereby left in suspense, and I expressed that view, with a wealth of details, in a critical letter addressed to Franco—a letter which, I might add, produced no result. A little later, I also wrote to Serrano Suñer who, at that time, was still a Minister and President of the political Junta of the Party, which he was forced to leave only shortly afterwards. That was my letter of resignation....

"Between 1942 and 1951, I remained outside the régime, adopting an attitude of passive criticism. The result of my resignation was a sentence of *confinamiento*, which lasted nearly five years. *Confinamiento* is compulsory residence, under police surveillance, in a fixed locality. I was sent first to Ronda, then to a village on the Catalan coast. I did not find that painful, since I like solitude: I was able to read and write as I pleased. On the other hand, I underwent considerable material hardship, since I have no resources other than those gained by my work. After that, I left for Italy, as a correspondent for the Falangist press. I must add, in all honesty, that no demands were made upon me in the political sphere: I was not asked to declare my loyalty to the régime, nor to follow a fixed line in my work....

"Having found employment outside journalism—where obviously one is much in the public eye—I left Italy. I must admit that I was tempted at one point to retrace my steps and accept a more or less technical and cultural post. I hesitated, but the affair came to nothing. After that, it was too late: by then, I had become convinced that it was not possible to collaborate with the régime, even in the most neutral sense, and still retain one's self-respect. I deliberately turned down an opportunity to go to Paris as press attaché, and thus to reinstate myself within the directing class of the Party 'with all due honours.' I also refused other invitations to take up official posts. Before I could feel drawn to it again, the régime itself would have had to have changed direction towards a genuinely far-reaching scheme of 'self-reform.' I spent a year in Madrid, seeing something at first hand of those political circles I had lost sight of ten years previously: and that year was enough to convince me that the régime was condemned to go on in exactly the same way until its final disappearance. There was no possibility of changing it. The only thing to do, therefore, was to hope that it would swiftly expire, and until that happened, to exert one's wits in the preparation of alternative solutions. I am sure that all that is needed is for Spaniards to believe in a solution, and the régime will collapse. Fear of the unforeseen is the only thing that protects the present system....

"Nevertheless, I must point out that, until a relatively recent date, I did not believe there could be any acceptable solution other than through a far-reaching *reform* of the structure, principles, and direction of the régime. I pursued this opposition line intensely from 1951 to 1955—but if intense, it was also ill-founded. My criticisms, demands, and appeals were all addressed to the régime itself and particularly to its functionaries.

"On what was my position based, and what did I hope to achieve? Everyone, in my opinion—the régime and its declared enemies—continues to pose the problem in relation to the war itself. But the war and the devastation which followed it are accomplished facts and, as such, irreversible. Franco's men maintain that victory must be sustained until there are no longer any vanquished in Spain, until the generations that took part in the war have reached their fifties, until all the former combatants are dead. In spite of its ruthlessness, this theory is a vain illusion. For the victors engender the van-

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quished; and not only do they engender them, they annex them. After all these years, there are many among us who were on the winning side, and yet feel themselves to be vanquished.... But the theory which opponents of the régime set up against this Falangist argument is no less absurd: it preaches revenge and a return to the past; it sets out to transform the vanquished of yesterday into victors, and as a reprisal, the former victors into vanquished. That would mean reopening the whole dispute. Whether just or not, it would be politically inacceptable. For as the years have passed, those who have remained here—whatever their ideology—have adapted themselves to the post-war period; they have ceased being part of the war....

"In [April] 1955, at the *Ateneo* in Barcelona, I nevertheless felt I had to denounce all the vicious aspects of the present situation as a whole, and to express my conviction that it was useless to expect any change in that situation, or any reform, so that we Spaniards had no one but ourselves to count on. My lecture was called: 'On the degradation of civic life in Spain.' It was then that my deliberate opposition to the Franco régime began. Then, in February, 1956, came the incident which was to demonstrate publicly and without equivocation where I stood; it was the result of prolonged contact with several university opposition groups. The news of my arrest was published in all the newspapers, and that was a favour for which I cannot thank them enough."

"How does it happen that all the visible leaders of the opposition against Franco are forced to live in exile, while you are able to remain here in Barcelona?"

"I must remind you that the régime continues to take as its criterion the division of the parties as it existed during the civil war. Those who are outside the country have to remain outside, first and foremost because they are the vanquished. Those inside the country, in principle, are the victors. The government still thinks in terms of these divisions, even if, for me, personally, they have long since ceased to exist."

"Does the régime persecute you?"

"I was given a sentence of *confinamiento* for five years, as I have already mentioned. Then I was imprisoned, in February and March, 1956, for a month and a half. The judge ordered my release, but I remained in prison by a government ruling until the full time had expired. I suppose that I am now 'under observation.' I became director of a private and commercial radio station, but I gave up that post for personal reasons. There are certain indications which lead me to believe that I should have had to leave it, in any case.... Apart from that, I have no feeling of being persecuted. I am not bothered or submitted to questioning. What is called 'persecution' in Spain is something infinitely worse than the petty vexations I have had to suffer...."

"Are you able to write for the press?"

"I cannot sign my name in the newspapers, nor write for them, naturally.... For that matter, I have not tried to, because it's not worth the trouble of making the attempt."

"In certain more or less clandestine circles, it is said that your political past gives you the privilege of being able to attack Franco. Have you any such privileges that enable you to range yourself with the opposition?"

"I can assure you that no one has passed a 'bill' giving me immunity, that no one has given me any authorisation. It is possible, however, that something of the sort of thing rumoured among your friends has indeed taken place, to the extent I have indicated in the preceding answer. But I have certainly seen nothing of any 'facilities.' Are you aware that my passport has been withdrawn, that I cannot write, and that it would be impossible for me to take part in any more or less political meeting, or to speak at any university demonstration? The one thing I can still do is to talk to people: and that's something everyone does in Spain, without much let or hindrance...."

"What political trend are you attached to?"

"I am not attached to any trend in any definite fashion. I am trying to find one. I shall have to answer your question, therefore, by a series of approximations. In politics, I am in favour of democracy, which I look upon more as an existing condition than a finished system. But I must say that the democracy we hope to achieve in Spain will have to be anything but simple. A strengthening of the executive power, its eventual separation from the legislative power, and the bestowal of responsibility on the parties considered as genuine constitutional organs: those, I think, are the measures that should be adopted.

"As for an 'impartial' and symbolic monarchy, I do not believe in its principles, but I consider that, as an instrument, it could be useful. It seems to me to offer a possibility—or should I say an inevitable outcome?—for the immediate future. I accept it as such. On another plane, I am ready unreservedly to add the word 'social' to the word 'democracy.'... If we want to 'socialise' freedom—and I am one of those who do—we must 'socialise' that which at present makes freedom a privilege and not a common good: i.e. wealth. As for the instruments of that 'socialisation,' I believe in the effectiveness of trade union principles of action; in fact, I believed in them even while I was still a Falangist. As opposed to increasing bureaucracy,

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I believe that these principles allow socialisation to take place in an organic but decentralised form, in such a way as to preserve the principle of competence in its full effectiveness within economic life.... If Spanish socialism were to make an opening in its ideological principles and re-fashion its programme, then I think we could rightfully look forward to it becoming the great party of the majority; for it is capable of representing the majority of both the middle and working classes, the classes Spain needs, and whose absence cost the Republic its life...."

"Is there such a thing as public opinion in Spain at present?"

"By and large, the only form that exists is negative in character. There are only two spheres that can be examined: the working class, which holds on to its class spirit, and like the chosen people, feels that it is being held captive; in short, it is aware that the silence imposed on it can only be temporary. And then, the compromised class, which contains a very high percentage of the bourgeois and middle layers of the population: and the compromised class is frightened of everything, repelled by everything. The consciously mobilised sections—those that deserve to be called 'public opinion'—are made up of small islands, sometimes extremely active and expanding rapidly, in the midst of this ocean."

"Do you think there is any likelihood of the pendulum of Spanish politics once more swinging over to the Left?"

"I do not think so at all. I foresee an Extreme Left, of wider scope than anything we had formerly, but also more prudent and circumspect, better informed, less impatient, and less anarchic than it was. The middle class seems to me to have acquired a social sense which formerly it totally lacked, and it is possible that the working class will arrive at a realism which it has not had up to now. If that happens, a dialogue will certainly come into being and firm and balanced majorities will be constituted. The one thing no longer possible in Spain will be a normally constituted Right Wing that remains faithful to its pre-war positions...."

"What are the forces at present at work on the political scene?"

"There are no forces, either for or against. By that I mean that there are no political forces. There are outlines, centres for the spreading of ideas, and groups, nearly all of them divided. The older men are starting their parties once more; the young are trying to renovate them, to re-create them and start them afresh. There is something of everything in the opposition, from Communism to a counter-revolutionary and utopian Conservatism. All the same, it is the working classes and the Church that will provide the natural centres for political mobilisation, precisely because politics—the whole range of ideologies from which one may choose—do not effectively exist. Within the régime itself, force belongs either with remnants deprived of all possibility of further progress and already in decline (the Falange), or with powerful social elements (bureaucratic castes, the Army, the Church, the economic oligarchy).... In my opinion, the monarchy is the magnetic centre which now polarises all these elements."

"How does Franco manage to stay in power?"

"It was fear of the revolution—even less than that, the fear of insecurity—that put Franco in power. Now, it is the fear of a bloody settling of accounts that keeps him there. Beneath this fear lies the uneasy awareness of having committed abuses, of having gone too far. Franco is also supported by a whole union of vast interests; giving proof of realism, he has always been very careful to keep that support."

"In what way can the international situation have any influence on the Spanish problem?"

"It has already had an influence on it. Tension between East and West explains the survival of the régime, even although it is not the sole reason for it. The period of international condemnation of Spain consolidated Franco not only because it gave birth to a tendency towards 'resistance unto death,' but also because it left the dictatorship with a free hand to crush the opposition. The period of working towards normal relations makes internal questions even more dependent on the international situation: Spanish public opinion entered a state of flux at precisely the moment that the proscription of Spain came to an end."

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Peter Gay

Three Stages on Love's Way

Rousseau, Laclos, Diderot

"Je ne désirais pas de jouir,
je voulais savoir."
—Marquise de Merteuil, in Laclos' *Les liaisons dangereuses*

IN 1782, Choderlos de Laclos, a *capitaine-commandant* in the French artillery, published a novel that scandalised even the jaded readers in that unpuritanical century. *Les liaisons dangereuses*, an immediate and immense success, dwelt lovingly on the joys of sexual pursuit, the initiation of the innocent, the degradation of the pious; it analysed with caressing care the stratagems of promiscuity and the rewards of betrayal; it introduced to the literary scene a pair of villains so spectacularly villainous, so utterly devoid of decency and so singlemindedly dedicated to evil, that only a great writer could prevent them from becoming incredible or ludicrous. Laclos' sudden emergence, his superb deftness and deep insight, startled the literary world; his earlier work, some facile verses of a mildly erotic turn, did not even hint at the range of his talent.

It was perhaps even more startling to see that Laclos had inscribed on the title page of his novel a moral motto: *"J'ai vu les mœurs de ce siècle, et j'ai publié ces lettres,"* a motto taken, of all places, from Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloïse*.

The readers of Laclos' novel must have suspected that the author was making fun of them: what could the world's most immoral novel have in common with a book that was a moral tract parading as a novel? Some critics of *Les liaisons dangereuses* pointed out that the villains of the novel are destroyed in the end, but the *dénouement*, on a far lower level of invention than the rest of the book, was either a joke on the reader or an immoral preachment in a novel guise: the villains are punished as a result of their first, and only, display of human feeling. Again, the external similarity of Rousseau's and Laclos' novels seems to mean little: both are about love and, more specifically, about seduction, but the identity of the theme vanishes before the divergence of the treatment. Both novels, finally, are epistolary, but that form was an almost compulsory international convention, initiated by Richardson and imitated by Goethe. The conclusion suggests itself, therefore, that Laclos chose his motto in bad faith and that he was not a disciple but a parodist of Rousseau. But this conclusion, plausible as it is, is mistaken. The two novels are related to each other dialectically: they embody different stages of the French 18th-century mind.

I

THE *philosophes* were above all reformers, suspicious of theoretical speculation for its own sake. But their practical demands for social and political change drove them, in spite of themselves, to reflect on the foundations of morality. Gropingly, not

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always wholly conscious of the revolutionary significance of their thinking, they evolved an image of the world that was distinctively modern—secular, determinist, scientific, pragmatic. They replaced the Christian world view with a non-Christian world view.

The most formidable victims of the new philosophy were Christian theology and the Christian churches—many 20th-century readers know little more about the *philosophes* than that they unmasked miracles, revelation, and priests. But the *philosophes* were not the first to attack the Christian world view—it had been on the defensive since the Renaissance, since the growth of capitalism and the state, since the discoveries of science—nor were they content to attack it alone. The *philosophes* were also trying to undermine the Christian view of man and of morality. These two rebellions were equally significant, but they were not equally successful. Christian cosmology found few intellectual defenders—17th-century rationalists had tried in vain to hold the line against scientific empiricism. But Christian morality found two allies: Puritanism and the bourgeoisie. Hence the *philosophes'* assault on Christian morality was at once more subversive and less effective than their assault on Christian cosmology.

The core of Enlightenment ethics was a favourable estimate of human nature and of the human enterprise. Voltaire said that Pascal had taught men to hate themselves, while they ought to learn, instead, to love themselves. David Hume, following the Renaissance Humanists and anticipating Nietzsche, derided Christian humility and defended a reasonable pride and a measured self-love. Kant spoke for the whole Enlightenment when he called upon men to strive for autonomy.

In seeking to free man from the stigma of original sin, the *philosophes* needed to rehabilitate the emotions. Human passions might be blind, unmeasured, but they were not evil. Above all, it was essential to reinstate sexuality in its legitimate place as a joyous, morally acceptable emotion. This was a grave and risky enterprise. Catholic social ethics had always found room for the Old Adam—it had tolerated ribald songs, erotic tales, sexual epithets. The very ritual and imagery of the Church were drenched in sexual symbols. Chivalry celebrated emotions that the Church had condemned as mortal sins. But Catholicism had always looked upon these escapes from the denigration of sexuality as concessions to sinful humans. These escapes were tolerated, not happily accepted. They were disguised, reinterpreted, or idealised: divorce was forbidden, but one might divest oneself of one's wife through annulment; chivalry sang love and pride, but pride was humbled and love rarely successful—sensuality, as Huizinga has shown, was transformed into the craving for self-sacrifice; courtly love was purified by the acceptable motive of loyalty and by the acceptable ending of marriage. These accommodations of Christian virtues to libidinal urges were shrewd concessions, but never more than that. Man was a vessel of wrath, sexuality was lust and concupiscence—the mark of man's folly and disobedience, not of his greatness.

The Reformation and the increasing acceptance of bourgeois standards only accentuated this rejection of the sexual urge; in this area, as in others, the Reformation was no liberation. Protestant divines deplored the flesh as they deplored images or colourful dress. Bourgeois laymen were more ambivalent: they could never resolve the conflict between gratification and abstention. They believed in indulgence and enjoyment, but they needed libidinal energies for the sake of accumulation and investment. Hence the bourgeois invention of "respectability"—a rationalisation of ambivalent sexual feelings; hence the bourgeois exaggeration of the old separation of sex from love.* When Protestant burghers derided priests they did so because the priest was parasitical, wasteful, unproductive.

The *philosophes'* demand for the reconstruction of sexual morality was thus not merely a pragmatic demand for greater licence, but a fundamental demand for a re-

* In his *Confessions*, Rousseau reports that he loved Mme de Warens and Mme d'Houdetot so much that he did not desire them.

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valuation of libidinal drives. It is fanciful to see the *philosophes* dissolutely chasing from *boudoir* to *boudoir*, or to think that all they wished for was the right to snigger at obscene pictures or to produce pornographic novels. The *philosophes* sought to break with conventional—that is to say, Christian and bourgeois—morality because in their opinion it restricted and even degraded man's nature. And in exalting man they sought to give a positive value to the strongest and most mysterious of his passions.

ROUSSEAU'S *Nouvelle Héloïse* is a timid first step in this campaign of liberation. It is perhaps the most conventional novel of seduction ever written. Conventional seems a strange word to apply to Rousseau who strove, from his first *Discours* onward to penetrate beyond artificiality to nature. But the *Nouvelle Héloïse* is conventional in accepting Christian standards of conduct. Love is an evil passion, to sleep with the person you love is a transgression that will permanently tarnish your whole existence. Moreover, love is a passion that victimises men. Rousseau is careful to deprive his hero of all responsibility: Saint-Preux, the middle-class tutor to gentle-born Julie, confesses to his young charge that he loves her. He knows that as a commoner he has little hope of winning the consent of Julie's aristocratic father, and he offers to leave. This moment, like the famous moment in Proust when the narrator's mother spends the night with her terrified boy, is the decisive moment of weakness from which all later weakness flows. Saint-Preux's offer to leave is like a politician's offer to resign: he knows it will not be accepted. If Saint-Preux had been a man, he would either have avowed his passion to Julie's father, or eloped with Julie, or, sensing the hopelessness of his attempt to cross class-lines, he would have departed. But no—Saint-Preux is like a little boy: he wants others to make decisions for him, he wants to transgress the moral code while swooning in an aura of moral approval. He protests that his sentiments are pure, and he is speaking the truth. What he does not know—and what Rousseau does not know—is that he wants to enjoy without paying. He is largely passive, the object rather than the master of passion. "I am no vile seducer!" he exclaims. He is right: it is virginal, pure-minded Julie who seduces him. He offers to leave, she begs him to stay. He avows the harmlessness of his love, she begs him to save her from a passionate transgression—an unconscious invitation that only puts an idea into Saint-Preux's mind. When things become complicated, Julie sends Saint-Preux away and when she learns that her father has picked out a wealthy elderly husband for her, she decides to lose her virginity with her beloved tutor. "I had to kill the author of my days, my lover, or myself. Without knowing what I was doing, I chose my own misfortune." What could be sweeter than to revenge yourself on "the author of your days" by indulging yourself with your lover? For ordinary mortals, perhaps, nothing, but for Julie there is one greater pleasure, a pleasure to which she surrenders for hundreds of pages —preaching.

THROUGHOUT most of the novel, Julie takes a high moral tone and lectures everybody. It is evident from Rousseau's careful handling of her soliloquies, and from the effect which they have on her listeners, that she is not to be taken as a prude, a bore, or a compulsive talker, but as a genuine moralist. Perhaps a little apologetically, Rousseau has Julie recognise her bent by having her call herself *la prêcheuse*, but no one in the novel seems to be able to do without her sermons. Even her proud father, who forgets himself enough to strike her in a moment of fury, finally succumbs to her rhetoric and her unique moral superiority. Julie is more than moral—she is strong as well. She decides when to invite Saint-Preux into what he calls "the sanctuary of all that my heart adores" (her bedroom)*; she decides to have a child

* This bedroom scene is the second time they have slept together. Interestingly enough, Julie is reluctant to take full responsibility for the first occasion. In reporting on it to her cousin Claire, she blames Claire for leaving Julie in a critical

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by her lover (a child that is, fortunately for the plot, miscarried when her father strikes her); she decides to send Saint-Preux into exile, and to marry her father's candidate, a bloodless rationalist named de Wolmar. When she finally dies after rescuing one of her children from drowning, still loving Saint-Preux, but also loving and respecting her husband, she dominates the final scene by arranging to marry Saint-Preux to her cousin Claire, another patient victim of her lectures. While this scheme fails, widower, lover, and cousin join to worship the memory of this extraordinary creature.

It has often been said that Julie is a conflation of several women whom Rousseau had loved, especially Madame d'Houdetot, who did not return Rousseau's middle-aged devotion and who, although filled with pity and kindness for Rousseau, refused to become unfaithful to her own lover, the poet Saint-Lambert. Another ingredient in Julie may have been Madame de Warens, Rousseau's matronly first mistress, whom he called, appropriately enough, *Maman*, and who had gravely invited Jean-Jacques to her bed: life anticipating art, naturally on a lower level.

But Julie is more than reality purified by the writer's imagination—she is Rousseau's idea of Woman: pure, unattainable, the guardian of morality, the embracing mother who dominates the lives of others, who permits closeness without sin, and who takes away the stain of transgression by her soothing words. That is Julie: the Woman as seen by the awed little son, the boy, who is tempted to sin, and hopes to sin without losing the affection of his mother. Rousseau—and Saint-Preux—are like the forlorn little boy in the story who tells the policeman on the corner that he is running away from home, but that he is standing on the sidewalk because he is not permitted to cross the street.

Julie, of course, seems not to have proved unattainable. But that is only an illusion. Despite her loss of virginity, she is sexually unfulfilled and indeed sexually indifferent. After her first experience she reports to her cousin nothing but remorse and confesses that she yielded out of pity. When she invites Saint-Preux to her bedroom the next time, she is fulfilling an obligation: "this very evening I can fulfil my promises, and pay all at once all the debts of love"—a significant metaphor. Saint-Preux enjoys love-making (that is evident from his incoherent expressions of joy) but Julie seems to see the act of love as an error, a concession to a male (who is, by his very masculinity, of cruder clay), a vulgar animal coupling that can be enjoyed by impure souls. Julie's love affair never seems to give her a sense of liberation. When she hears the solemn words of the wedding service which unite her to the respectable M. de Wolmar, she feels herself purified. She is mistaken: she has never been defiled. She is, alas, a perpetual virgin.

JULIE expresses her conventionality even more forcefully in the choices she makes: she is willing to sleep with Saint-Preux, but she will not run away to Paris with him. She rationalises her refusal by writing him that she is torn between obligations to her parents and love for Saint-Preux. And when she decides, she decides as we expect her to: instead of abandoning her home and a father whom Rousseau has described as self-willed, loutish, overbearing, and stupid, she abandons the only man whom she can ever love. She does not seem to feel that marrying a man she does not love is an immoral act—by her sacrifice she has maintained and sanctified the order of society. The radical Rousseau has been unwilling to tear the fabric of class relations. Perhaps the most significant incident in the novel is the death of Julie's child by Saint-Preux through her father's blow: a symbolic victory of convention over emotion, of obedience over love. The "first romantic novel" becomes a cautionary tale against love, passion, and rebellion.

Julie is pure—her purity is only intensified by her lapse; Saint-Preux is weak—his weakness is only accentuated by his occasional,

moment, thereby making the seduction possible. But she comes through: in the same letter she collects herself, refuses to blame either Claire or Saint-Preux: "he is not guilty; I alone am guilty; all my miseries are my work, and I have no one to blame but myself."

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ineffectual acts of rebellion. Since Julie's kind of purity is a form of weakness, Julie and her lover may be said to have much in common. And they have something else in common—their overwhelming desire to purge themselves through talk. Like Doña Ana in Shaw's *Man and Superman*, they love confession. We know that Rousseau himself sought to expiate his crimes, real or imagined, by confessing the whole truth, or even more than the whole truth; and the protagonists of *La Nouvelle Héloïse* drown their guilty consciences in an avalanche of pitiless self-recrimination. It is not that the lovers seek to deal honestly with each other—that would be human and desirable. Their constant confessions are not honesty; they permit the lovers to act without assuming responsibility. Saint-Preux confesses his guilty love to Julie, hoping that his candour will bring absolution from the object of his adoration and thus permit him to go on loving. Until Julie can confess her premarital lapse to her husband, she cannot be fully happy, and she hopes that her confession will, in some miraculous way, remove the stain from her act of love. The ritualistic nature of her confession is underlined by the fact that her omniscient husband had known of her affair with Saint-Preux all along. Again, while Saint-Preux is in Paris, he falls in with a fast crowd and one morning, after a drunken night, he finds himself in bed with a courtesan. It is the very event against which Julie had warned him earlier—"I am not afraid that the senses and coarse pleasures will corrupt you"—and which Saint-Preux had promised would never happen: "But why so many exhortations when you only need to give me orders?" Now Paris is far from Vevey, Julie's home, but instead of remaining silent about the incident like a sensible man, Saint-Preux describes it to Julie in the most embarrassing detail and begs her forgiveness: "Julie, O Julie! Whom at one time I dared to call mine, and whose name I profane today! the pen escapes my trembling hand; my tears inundate the paper . . ." and then, with unconscious insight: "I can neither keep quiet nor speak. Come, honourable and dear image, come to purify and to strengthen a heart degraded by shame and broken by repentance. Uphold my courage which is extinguished; give my remorse the strength to avow the involuntary crime which your absence has permitted me to commit." Then, for two pages, a complete confession, ending with the request for punishment: "I have finished this awful account; let it no longer soil your attention or my memory. O you, from whom I await my judgment, I implore rigour; I deserve it. Whatever my punishment will be, it will be less cruel to me than the memory of my crime."*

I need hardly add that all these expectations of forgiveness are fulfilled, that all these lapses are condoned, and that the confessors show a depth of understanding almost unheard of outside the confessional until the advent of psychoanalysis. It is true that forgiveness is apt to be a little sententious and self-righteous—Julie gives Saint-Preux a lecture that is likely to make the modern reader squirm—but she forgives him, and that is all that he desired. So much guilt! So much desire to satisfy one's passions, and so much need to have these "low" satisfactions sanctified!

This is not sincerity, it is the cult of sincerity. Sincerity partakes of reason; it includes not only candour but also judicious silence. It is against Alceste's cult of sincerity that Philinte upholds sincerity in Molière's *Misanthrope*:

Il faut, parmi le monde, une vertu traitable;
A force de sagesse on peut être blâmable;
La parfaite raison fuit toute extrémité
Et veut que l'on soit sage avec sobriété.

THE cult of sincerity is the compulsive need to confess all, to eschew circumlocution, to despise politeness. In the area of social relations it results in fanaticism—the sense of superiority accompanied by the need to make others conform to one's own standards of purity. When Saint-Preux goes to Paris he finds much to censure in good

* Rousseau tells us in his *Confessions*, Book VIII, that this incident was drawn from life—his life.

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society. The Parisian wit strikes him as empty rather than delightful, its courtesy as fraudulent rather than well-mannered. Saint-Preux —and through him, Rousseau—is a tiresome, and perhaps dangerous, enemy of "hypocrisy."

Satirists have always found ready material in the gap between profession and performance that is called "hypocrisy." But the searching satirist does not simply denounce hypocrisy, he sees it as a contradiction between socially acceptable and socially necessary behaviour; he is concerned with exposing the contradiction rather than displaying his own purity by desiring the "hypocrite" to avow his feelings and actions. Shaw, in *Widowers' Houses*, exhibits respectable bourgeois living off slums, but he is concerned not with the sincerity of the bourgeois—what would be gained by the slum dweller if his landlord openly acknowledged the source of his wealth?—but with the social origin of his "hypocrisy."

Moreover, Rousseau's cult of sincerity—of which most of his characters are devotees—is a mask for insincerity. In seeking to undo by confession what cannot be undone, the protagonists of *La Nouvelle Héloise* lie to themselves about their actions and about their very natures.

Those who think of Rousseau only as a tearful romantic may be surprised by the didactic character of his novel. In fact, Rousseau deliberately designed his novel as a tract and carefully adjusted its style to his purpose. In its description of nature and of peasants' feasts, *La Nouvelle Héloïse* has an eloquent lyricism that was pioneering and that was justly influential. But in its interminable debates, it veered between carefully weighed classical antitheses that would have delighted Gibbon, and incoherent ejaculations, liberally using suspension dots and exclamation points, that are designed to convey intolerable emotional tension:

> "Ah, God! My mother sends for me. Whither shall I fly? How stand her looks? Why can't I hide myself in the bosom of the earth! . . . My whole body trembles and I am not in a state to take a step. . . . Shame, humiliation, severe reproaches. . . . I have deserved everything; I shall stand everything. But the pain, the tears of a disconsolate mother. . . . O my heart, what lacerations! . . . She is waiting for me, I can delay no longer. . . . She'll want to know . . . it will be necessary to tell all. . . . Regianino will be fired. Don't write me any more until further notice. . . . Who knows if ever . . . I could . . . what! lie! . . . Lie to my mother! . . . Ah! if we must save ourselves by a lie, adieu, we are lost!"

Whatever the virtues of such heart-rending monologues, whatever the virtues of the novel—as a specimen of the Enlightenment revolt against Christian morality, *La Nouvelle Héloïse* does not carry the revolt very far. Julie, it is true, does not avow herself a sinner even after her Fall, and professes a Deism that has little doctrinal relation to Christianity. But in its deeper struggle with conventionality, the novel's characters surrender again and again. They have sexual relations which they enjoy neither as sensual experiences nor as moral liberation; they are sincere with each other but dishonest with themselves; they think that they are free spirits, and act conventionally; the one unconventional character, Julie's husband, is a chilly manipulator of emotions, a man who plays a game with life, free because he is dead and not because he is alive; the rights of love yield before the rights of class. Rebellion there is, but it is feeble and abortive; conventional morality is victorious on all fronts. The prevailing emotion of *La Nouvelle Héloïse* is fear.

II

With Choderlos de Laclos' *Les liaisons dangereuses* the rebellion against Christian morality is carried a step further. Laclos' novel, writes F. C. Green, is a reply to *La Nouvelle Héloïse*. It is more than that: it is a development of the morality of Rousseau's novel converted into its opposite. Where Rousseau is conventional, moral, and edifying, Laclos is unconventional, immoral, and destructive. In Rousseau everybody wins through losing: the sacrifice of gratification leads to purer, more exalted happiness. In Laclos, everybody loses through winning: in-

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sistence on gratification leads to restlessness, a sense of being cheated, and tragedy. Rousseau offers us the cult of sincerity, Laclos the cult of insincerity.

For a book that spends so much time on sex, there is singularly little sexual enjoyment in *Les liaisons dangereuses*. The two chief actors of the novel, the marquise de Merteuil and her unwitting henchman, the vicomte de Valmont, are no strangers to voluptuousness. They are masters in the varieties of sexual experience. After having given her current lover a hard day, Mme de Merteuil makes up for it with an intimate night which she describes to M. de Valmont in erotic detail: "... my pardon was sealed on that same ottoman where you and I sealed, so gaily and in the same manner, our eternal rupture. Since we had six hours to spend together, and since I had resolved that this whole time should be equally delicious for him, I calmed his raptures and friendly coquettishness replaced tenderness. I do not believe that I have ever taken such pains to please.... After supper, in turn childish and reasonable, wanton and responsive, sometimes even licentious, I pleased myself to treat him like a sultan in his seraglio, where I was in turn his different favourites. Indeed, his repeated homage, although always received by the same woman, was always received by a new mistress."

But neither Merteuil nor Valmont experiences sex as part of a creative human relation. They see it as momentary gratification of the senses, and more importantly as part of an exquisite game that fascinates them far more than intercourse: the playing of a rôle for the sake of degrading others. The sexual act is an act of destruction, of hostility; it comes as the culmination of a long campaign, the result of far-seeing strategy, delicate tactics, clever assaults, and cleverer retreats.* Mme de Merteuil gets more enjoyment from deceiving the world by appearing as a prude than from having lovers. She concocts an elaborate plot that results in the disgrace of a sexual athlete —a man whom she regards as desirable, as a *superbe vainqueur*—rather than having an affair with him that would have pleased her physically. Similarly Valmont prefers arduous campaigns of conquest and convoluted stratagems to simple sensual satisfaction.

Most of the plot of *Les liaisons dangereuses* centres around Valmont's successful attacks on the virtue of two women, *la présidente* de Tourvel, a pious, cool, and faithful wife, and Cécile Volanges, an empty-headed, sensual, flirtatious young virgin. Mme de Merteuil's motive in encouraging the second conquest is revenge upon the girl and her fiancé, who had apparently slighted her; her motive in discouraging the first is the fear that Valmont might discover the human emotion of real love. Valmont complicates his seduction of Mme Tourvel to an almost unbelievable degree: he plays the rôle of a charitable but dissolute young man whom the pious lady is to save from himself; her final downfall involves her confessor who is made an unconscious appendage to Valmont's plot; and her surrender to him must take certain ritual forms. As for his seduction of Cécile, all too easy for an experienced rake like him, Valmont adds piquant touches to his affair with her by teaching her positions and words that he would not dare, he writes, to demand from *toutes les filles dont c'est le métier*. As a sexually experienced man, with unlimited time, funds, and opportunities, he prefers these two tortuous conquests of unawakened and unsophisticated women (who are likely to be physically unsatisfactory) to nights with actresses, ladies of the town, or former mistresses whose talents he has good reason to remember. Valmont, like Mme de Merteuil, is not solely, or even largely, interested in sensual gratification.

BUT IF *Les liaisons dangereuses* is not mainly about sex, what is it about? I have said that it celebrates the cult of insincerity. Indeed, the amount of deception and

* In his excellent analysis, Martin Turnell has pointed to Laclos' constant use of military metaphors and expressions. There is, it should be noted, some relation of Valmont to Don Juan: both are adolescent lovers, and Shaw's Don Juan in hell shocks his hearers by telling them that "the sex relation is not a personal or friendly relation at all." But the two are also very different. Don Juan seeks confirmation, Valmont destruction, through sex.

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plotting is staggering. Valmont lies to the women he tries to seduce, and to his friend Mme de Merteuil; Mme de Merteuil lies to everybody, resting her whole reputation on a cynical deception; Mme Tourvel lies to her husband; Cécile lies to her mother, her fiancé, and her lover. On a deeper level, the characters lie to themselves: Mme Tourvel permits herself to drift into a ruinous affair with Valmont by denying her sensuality, conscious only of her sincere desire to save the charming reprobate from himself; Cécile has no inkling of her multiple faithlessness. Even the rational, cold-blooded protagonists are not safe from self-deception: Valmont thinks he is in control of his passions, but he is, in fact, their slave. He thinks himself the freest of mortals; repudiating morality at will, he is caught in a web of compulsions that he does not understand or even recognise. Even his vile pursuit of Mme Tourvel, as Mme de Merteuil astutely reminds him, is based on emotions that he does not grasp. Most significantly, Mme de Merteuil, who thinks of herself as a chessplayer of vice, who has carefully worked out her philosophy and rationalised her resentments, falls in love with the chevalier Danceny (Cécile's lover before Valmont, supposedly his friend, had taken over from him) and commits an imprudence that takes the game out of her hands, and results in the death of Valmont and in her own complete ruin. And there is deception even on another level: in advertising *Les liaisons dangereuses* as a moral novel, Laclos is lying either to his reader or to himself.

The whole novel, then, to use an old-fashioned phrase, is a tissue of lies. Even its humour depends on deception: two of the most amusing, and at the same time most chilling passages of the book (perhaps, by their very playfulness, its most immoral scenes) are based on Valmont's perverse sense of humour. Early in his pursuit of Mme Tourvel, Valmont writes her from the bed of an actress, after a night of continuous love-making, using his mistress's back as a desk. In the middle of the letter he interrupts to make love to his actress and then resumes his writing. The action is mirrored in the letter itself, which can only be described as a long and diabolical pun:

> "It is after a stormy night, during which I did not close an eye; it is after having been without cease either in the agitation of a devouring ardour, or in the complete annihilation of all the faculties of my soul, that I come to seek near you, Madame, a rest which I need, and which nevertheless I do not think I shall enjoy. Indeed, the situation in which I find myself while writing to you, makes me know better than ever the irresistible power of love; I have difficulty in preserving enough mastery over myself to put my ideas in some order; and already I foresee that I shall not finish this letter without being interrupted. What! May I not hope that you will share one day the turmoil which I am undergoing at this moment? . . . Believe me, Madame, cold tranquillity, the sleep of the soul, image of death, do not lead to happiness; only the active passions can lead to it; and despite the torments which you are making me undergo, I think I can say without fear that at this moment I am happier than you. . . . I have never had so much pleasure in writing to you; never before did I feel, in this occupation, a feeling as sweet and yet so lively. Everything seems to increase my raptures: the air I breathe is filled with voluptuousness; the very table on which I am writing to you, devoted to this purpose for the first time, becomes for me the sacred altar of love; how it will grow in beauty in my eyes! I shall have traced on it the vow to love you always! Forgive me, I beg you, the disorder of my senses. I should perhaps give myself less to raptures that you do not share: I must leave you for a moment to dissipate an intoxication which grows with every moment, and which is becoming too strong for me.
>
> I return to you, Madame. . . ."

The other incident is minor, but it displays Valmont's ingenuity. One night, dining at the château of a vicomte and his vicomtesse, the latter asks Valmont to spend the night. He replies that he will do so with pleasure if he can spend the night with the vicomtesse. "Impossible," she tells him—her lover is in the château. Piqued by the word "impossible," Valmont decides to persevere, and succeeds in persuading the vicomtesse. That night he finds that the vicomtesse's husband sleeps in the room to her right, her lover is lodged to her left, and he—Valmont—across the hall. After a complicated arrangement, involving trumped-up quarrels and multiple

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deceptions, Valmont succeeds in sleeping with the vicomtesse.

If we consider *Les liaisons dangereuses* in the stream of the 18th-century novel, if we inquire, not whether it is moral or disgusting, but what is its relation to Rousseau, we find that it is a mirror image of *La Nouvelle Héloïse*. And just as we saw that Rousseau's cult of sincerity masked insincerity, Laclos' cult of insincerity masks sincerity. For with all its lies, *Les liaisons dangereuses* earnestly, almost desperately, tries to tell the truth. It may be objected that this is taking these scabrous adventures too seriously. But they deserve to be taken seriously—they are a departure from and a distinct advance over, most earlier treatments of love. In the Christian centuries physical love had been ignored, spiritualised, sentimentalised, or depicted with pornographic directness. Laclos was trying to probe beyond the appearance of love to its reality, and in associating love with hostility had been anticipated by few writers, perhaps only Racine in France. That Laclos saw the whole of love and of life can safely be doubted, but what he did see he saw sharply and pitilessly.

The never-ending plotting for physical conquest might be a search for love, a search for confirmation of manliness or of worthiness, but it could not be love itself. To the protagonists of *Les liaisons dangereuses* it was hate. Valmont and Mme de Merteuil hate their victims, hate their world, and hate themselves. In moments of recognition they see that what they really want in this world is revenge. And this revenge can be achieved only by the degradation of others. "I have unveiled a double mystery of love and iniquity," writes Valmont to his confidante, "I shall enjoy the one and revenge the other; I shall fly from pleasure to pleasure." Mme de Merteuil, in a long letter to Valmont, makes clear that in the eternal combat between Man and Woman, the latter must conquer the former since otherwise she is at Man's mercy. Women are condemned to depend on man's decency; they can liberate themselves only by supreme rationality and supreme ruthlessness." *"Il faut vaincre ou périr"*—a doctrine which makes love impossible and revenge essential.

This is the fundamental meaning of *Les liaisons dangereuses*. The old Christian values have collapsed, and the discovery of this awesome truth has brought not true liberation but the semblance of liberation. The adolescent who has discovered that his parents are not perfect is free only to say No—free not to enjoy but to reject. Throughout the novel, piety is pitted unsuccessfully against evil, and both Mme de Merteuil and Valmont openly repudiate God. But their rebellion is incomplete: they are like adolescents shaking their fist at an empty sky. The prevailing emotion of *Les liaisons dangereuses* is rage.

III

Kant defined the free man as autonomous and the unfree man as heteronomous. Autonomous actions proceed from choice and deliberative judgments—they spring from needs, and aim towards ends that are recognised and understood. Heteronomous actions proceed from compulsions—they aim not at the announced goal but at a goal hidden both from the world and from the actor. A man who acts in order to prove something—to himself or to others—is not free, and the man who acts to prove that he is free is perhaps the most enslaved of all. In *La Nouvelle Héloïse* convention is accepted for the sake of acceptance—conventionality is debated and occasionally disregarded, but it always wins out without having to give reasons. The rationalisations of the protagonists are not reasons, they are excuses. In *Les liaisons dangereuses* convention is rejected for the sake of rejection; the rationalisations offered for the violations of convention are rarely the real reasons. Neither Rousseau's nor Laclos' characters are therefore free, no matter what the appearances. They prove, if they prove anything at all, that Christian morality was proving hard to displace.

There is evidence, however, that some Enlightenment thinkers glimpsed the way to a constructive non-Christian moral code. Some of them saw that the road to freedom—that is

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to say, the road to maturity—lay in the acceptance of passion and in the integration of passion into a rational conduct of life. Ironically enough, Rousseau achieved this integration, which had escaped him in his novel, in his political thought. Whatever we may think of Rousseau's political Idealism, his "solution" of the conundrum of how to reconcile authority and liberty enlisted the whole man: the political enterprise of becoming worthy of a society in which the general will prevailed encouraged the natural growth of reason, grafted organically upon human emotions. To participate in the general will is an experience in which reason and the passions cooperate and ennoble each other. Similarly, Voltaire's social thought sought to reconcile passion and reason through a gradual process of education, a slow liberation from enthusiasm (perverted and uninformed emotion), and a slow recognition of reality (the channelling and shaping of emotion through reason). Whatever the rationalism of some Christian theologians, fundamental to Christianity was the enmity of passion and salvation: a sense of guilt was to hold back desire—the Fall of Man at once created lust and gave man a weapon against it. In the Enlightenment, the dichotomy of lust versus guilt was softened into the opposition of reason to emotion, and with this softening there arose the opportunity of achieving a view of man in which these opposites would be reconciled.

Perhaps the most representative example of this reconciliation, expressed in a new attitude towards sexual morality, is the work of Diderot. Among his many works, the delightful little masterpiece, *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*, written in 1772, exactly midway between the publication dates of *La Nouvelle Héloïse* and *Les liaisons dangereuses*, may be taken as typical. Diderot accepts and even exalts sexual urges, but he does so without a sense of doing anything wrong or daring, he is neither smutty nor coy, he neither gloats nor preaches. Moreover, Diderot seeks to integrate sexual life into the life of the community as well as into the life of the individual—love-making is delightful in itself and useful socially.

THE success of Diderot's enterprise is proved by his daring to be conventional. That is not a paradox: the scared child does not dare to transgress the prevailing moral code, the rage-filled adolescent does not dare to conform to the prevailing moral code. Only the mature individual can judge each act on its merits—he cheerfully accepts restrictions that are rational, just as he cheerfully insists on gratification that is productive. He is neither conventional for the sake of conventionality nor unconventional for the sake of unconventionality. He knows that only *that* self-restraint is mature that is freely arrived at; it is self-limitation based on self-acceptance not self-rejection, and it alternates with enjoyment, with what is wrongly called "indulgence." Rational self-limitation is not grim, just as rational enjoyment is not frantic.

Diderot's *Supplément* began as a book-review of Bougainville's report on his world tour. For his imaginative purposes, Diderot constructed a long dialogue between Tahitians and members of Bougainville's party, illuminating the ills of contemporary France. The civilised conduct of his Tahitians has sometimes been obscured by the still widely accepted myth that the *philosophes* sought to return to the life of the noble savage. Diderot's Tahitians are noble, but they are not savages. They are genuinely civilised men, and they are genuinely free. To them, Western manners and laws would be "nothing but shackles disguised in a hundred different ways. These shackles could only provoke the indignation and scorn of creatures in whom the most profound feeling is a love of liberty."*

Tahitian society, as viewed by Bougainville and as reconstructed by Diderot, is a rational social order. Its chief virtue is its closeness to man's nature: its institutions accept and use the deep promptings of human passions. There is no private property either in land or in women, but the system of pro-

* For the *Supplément*, I have used the excellent translation of Ralph H. Bowen in his and Jacques Barzun's edition of Diderot's *Rameau's Nephew and Other Works*. All other translations are my own.

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duction does not lead to scarcity: "When we are hungry we have something to eat; when we are cold, we have clothing to put on." The Tahitians' wants are simple, but their simplicity is not a virtue created by necessity—it is a rational code of conduct. Western civilisation, driven by work and competitive values, leads to anxiety not happiness: "We have no wish to barter what you call our ignorance for your useless knowledge," the Tahitian spokesman indignantly informs the French invaders.

SPEAKING through his Tahitians, Diderot thus defines "natural" not as primitive or animal-like, but as appropriateness. Hence sexual intercourse is facilitated but not free from sensible restrictions. Tahitian sexual relations, as Diderot describes them, had been healthy until Bougainville's party brought the scourge of syphilis; they had been openly enjoyed, without false modesty, until Bougainville's party introduced Western prudishness:

> "But a little while ago, the young Tahitian girl blissfully abandoned herself to the embraces of a Tahitian youth and awaited impatiently the day when her mother, authorised to do so by her having reached the age of puberty, would remove her veil and uncover her breasts. She was proud of her ability to excite men's desires, to attract the amorous looks of strangers, of her own relatives, of her own brothers. In our presence, without shame, in the centre of a throng of innocent Tahitians who danced and played the flute, she accepted the caresses of the young men whom her young heart and the secret promptings of her senses had marked out for her. The notion of crime and the fear of disease have come among us only with your coming. Now our enjoyments, formerly so sweet, are attended with guilt and terror. That man in black, who stands near you and listens to me, has spoken to our young men, and I know not what he has said to our young girls, but our youths are hesitant and our girls blush. Creep away into the dark forest, if you wish, with the perverse companion of your pleasures, but allow the good, simple Tahitians to reproduce themselves without shame under the open sky and in broad daylight."

This improbable discourse reads like a deliberate, carefully worked-out mockery of the Christian view of sex. It contradicts, point for point, the writings of the Church fathers.* In the paradise of Tahiti's innocence, Christian morality, coupled with Western licence, acts the part of the serpent. Diderot, then, wryly accepts the Fall; he only transfers the burden of responsibility: it is Christianity that is guilty of introducing sin into the world—the sin against nature. Diderot relates that after Bougainville's landing, the ship's chaplain is invited to stay in one of the natives' huts. Orou and his family make their guest comfortable, and feed him a "wholesome though frugal meal." When the chaplain is about to go to sleep, his host appears by his bed with his wife and three daughters, "all naked as Eve," and makes him a little speech: "You are young and healthy and you have just had a good supper. He who sleeps alone, sleeps badly; at night a man needs a woman at his side. Here is my wife and here are my daughters. Choose whichever one pleases you most, but if you would like to do me a favour, you will give your preference to my youngest girl, who has not yet had any children."

The chaplain declines, pleading "his religion, his holy orders, his moral standards, and his sense of decency," a refusal that sends Orou into a lyrical defence of nature: "I don't know what this thing is that you call 'religion,' but I can only have a low opinion of it because it forbids you to partake of an inno-

* Cf. Saint Augustine's lengthy discussion of the origin of lust in *The City of God*, Book XV. Augustine argues that lust (which he defines as "the lustful excitement of the organs of generation") did not exist before Eve's sin of disobedience. Since its appearance, sexual intercourse has been attended with lust and hence with shame, and Augustine holds that "lust requires for its consummation darkness and secrecy; and this not only when unlawful intercourse is desired, but even such fornication as the earthly city has legalised." While the Cynics thought otherwise, and Diogenes once publicly performed intercourse, "instinctive shame has overborne this wild fancy." However, Augustine is troubled over the question if generation would have taken place without sin. He holds that it would have: Adam and Eve would have copulated without lust, commanding their members by will: "The man, then, would have sown the seed, and the woman received it, as need required, the generative organs being moved by the will, not excited by lust . . .," moving them as we move our hands.

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cent pleasure to which Nature, the sovereign mistress of us all, invites everybody." The refusal is impolite, it offends hospitality as well as the need for offspring. The only excuse Orou will accept is physiological: "I cannot ask you to do anything that might harm your health; if you are too tired, you should by all means go to sleep at once." The conflict between unnatural discipline and natural desire ends as it must end—exclaiming over and over, "But there is my religion! My holy orders!" the chaplain spends the night with the girl.

THIS manly act of gratitude emboldens Orou to question his guest about Christianity and to unmask its unnaturalness. Their dialogue goes beyond the usual *philosophe* diatribe: it juxtaposes a natural morality that accepts human urges and shapes them to their finest expression, and an unnatural morality that seeks to suppress or denigrate these urges. The Christian God appears to insist that sexual intercourse be practised only after certain rites have been observed, and only within certain limitations: one man is restricted, for life, to one woman. These precepts Orou finds "contrary to nature, and contrary to reason." They are "admirably calculated to increase the number of crimes and to give endless annoyance" to the God of Christianity. The laws regulating morality in the West appear to Orou "contrary to the general order of things. For in truth is there anything so senseless as a precept that forbids us to heed the changing impulses that are inherent in our being . . . ?" Mere verbal injunctions, the orders or incantations of priests, do not change what is good in nature to evil:

> "Would you like to know what is good and what is bad in all times and places? Pay close attention to the nature of things and actions, to your relations with your fellow-creatures, to the effect of your behaviour on your own well-being and on the general welfare. You are mad if you believe that there is anything in the universe, high or low, that can add or subtract from the laws of nature."

Indeed, and this is the heart of Diderot's indictment of Christianity and his most revolutionary insight—by decreeing unnatural restrictions, Christianity makes people miserable and criminal: "People will no longer know what they ought or ought not to do. They will feel guilty when they are doing nothing wrong. . . ."

Tahitians live according to nature; Europeans try to live against it and fail. It is easy for Orou to get the chaplain to admit that in Europe the precepts of Christian morality are constantly violated and rarely punished. Diderot's point is not that there ought to be no restrictions on sexual behaviour, but that the restrictions ought only to grow from certain limits which are themselves pointed out by nature. Bigamy, fornication, incest, adultery—these are all imaginary crimes: to invent such terms, to punish such behaviour, can only lead to unhappiness, crime, and hypocrisy. In Tahiti, both love affairs and marriages may be dissolved after a month but not sooner, and there are strict taboos on sexual intercourse before full sexual maturity has been reached: "That's the main object of our children's education within the family circle, and it's the most important point in our code of public morality."

It should not be imagined that the debate between Orou and the chaplain is wholly one-sided. The chaplain makes one shrewd hit which Diderot had vision enough to invent but not vision enough to exploit fully: the chaplain objects that loose family ties in Tahiti reduce "tenderness between husband and wife, and maternal love," and Orou can only feebly admit that this is so and contend —even more feebly—that the loss is more than made up for by the gratification of the impulse of self-interest. Diderot has succeeded in breaking the antithesis of virtue and gratification, of passion and goodness, but he has not yet discovered (at least not in the *Supplément*) the possibility of relating passion to love, to affection, to constancy. He has not yet made the jump from involvement to attachment; to the extent that he seems unwilling to subject love to the voluntary bonds of affection, he has failed to reach full maturity.

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OR WOULD it be better to say that his Tahitians have not yet reached full maturity? In his passion to criticise the *ancien régime*, Diderot frequently becomes didactic; he is too interested in showing the social utility of a relaxed sexual code to follow through the consequences of his own description or to dwell sufficiently on the sheer physical joy of sexual relations. There are moments when his description breathes a kind of carefree, good-humoured rapture—the chaplain in bed with the girl, the initiation rites—but all too often Diderot is selling a programme, and the propaganda interferes with the purity of his perception.

That Diderot himself could think—and feel—beyond the Tahitian view of love he demonstrates in some of his other works. In the article "Jouissance" in the *Encyclopédie*, Diderot rises from the joy of purely physical union to the union of souls, from simple satisfaction of an urge to a careful choice of mate, from momentary gratification to that soberer but more worthwhile happiness of a permanent union crowned by children.

If we take, then, Diderot's *Supplément*, and round it out with other works, we find that his view towards sexual passion is dialectically related to Rousseau and Laclos: it represents the complete and positive repudiation of Christian morality. I have said that in Rousseau the characters win through losing, and that in Laclos the characters lose through winning. In Diderot, finally, they win through winning: gratification creates further gratification, the reward of passion is happiness. With all its limitations, the prevailing emotion of *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville* is love.

The Change

I HELD you close, O warm you lay
  Where dank familiar peeling walls
Proclaimed an end of warmth and day.
  "Here, love, no gleam of daylight calls,"
I said. You answered with a sigh:
  "I am afraid of such nightfalls—
    O do not let me die!"

"But die," I said, "for death is night,
  We are alone, these walls are steep,
You cannot climb from here to light,
  Therefore give me your fear to keep."
You did not love but you spoke gently,
  So near you were to me and sleep:
    "Comfort me and I'll die!"

My pleading now turns to despair:
  The basement walls grow thin, recede
Till we inhabit empty air.
  How shall I follow where you lead?
For you have wings, I cannot fly,
  I drop to earth but for your need:
    O do not let me die!

Martin Seymour-Smith

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Herbert Passin

The Mountain Hermitage

Pages from a Japanese Notebook

Invasion of Privacy

ONE very good thing I have learned from writer friends in Japan is that when you have a lot of work to do, especially writing, the best thing is to take yourself off and hide away. The Japanese have a word for this, the *kanzume*, or the "tin can," which means about what we would mean by the "lock-up." When someone gets off by himself to concentrate, they say "he has gone into the tin can." Thus it has elements of the retreat, the prison, and the hideaway. Ordinarily very few people, if any at all, will know where the person has gone; and the innkeepers and maids are under strict orders to keep away visitors and telephone calls.

Usually the tin can is imposed by editors or publishers who have deadlines to meet, so that when they want the writer to meet an urgent schedule—of which there are many in Japan—they will arrange for him to be locked away until the work is done. The prison is frequently, at least for the prominent writer, an elegant Japanese-style inn, often in a hot-spring resort, where he is waited upon by graceful and efficient retainers who look after his every want silently and swiftly. Messengers will stand by, often in relays, to rush every precious page as it is written to the waiting presses. Masseuses are there to relieve his aching muscles and, if the stay is very long, there may even be some suitable entertainment with lutes and lilting female voices.

Finding myself one day with a great backlog of work that showed no signs of reducing itself, I decided to follow the example of my Japanese friends and go into the tin can for a while. My lock-up, let it be understood, was strictly self-imposed. There were no limousines with liveried chauffeurs waiting to waft me to a mountain inn, nor were there anxious editors awaiting my jewelled words with fretful impatience. Most of these hideaways are only a short distance from Tokyo because the writers are too busy to go far away. But since I was under no exigent pressure, I decided to trade a little time and distance for more solitude and quiet. The place I selected was about 120 miles from Tokyo at an elevation of about 4,500 feet in the heart of the central spine of mountains that runs through the long axis of Japan. The area abounds in high peaks between eight and ten thousand feet, and in the nearby Japan Alps, a gigantic cordillera that is snow-covered throughout most of the year, some run as high as 12,000 feet.

TATESHINA is what the Japanese call a *kôgen*, a high plane or *altiplano*, and owing to its peculiar position—it is protected from the rains off the Japan Sea by the mountain massif and from the Pacific rains by distance—it has the reputation of being the driest spot in Japan, if one may use a term that suggests deserts and the crackling of bone-dry, brittle wood when what is really meant is only slightly less moisture than

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usual. Its dryness, such as it is, has brought to it sanatoria and rest homes, especially for lung cases, and in recent years large companies have taken to building rest villas for their employees. One should, I know, welcome these at least as the signs of an enlightened capitalism showing a proper concern for the welfare of its employees; and Japan has much need of this.. But for the seeker after solitude, it simply means that yet another place is being swallowed up by the casual vacationer and the organised holiday groups with their insatiable demand for neon lights, blaring loudspeakers, horseback trotting around a small ring, soda pop, and pinball machines. Where along a particularly beautiful bluff that commands an enormous vista of rivers, waterfalls, and great ranges of mountains fading off into the distance like old Japanese or Chinese ink drawings, there used to be a thousand yards at least between houses, since the end of the war the intervening spaces have been so filled in that there will soon be village where once there was wilderness. Last year, I am told, on one Sunday, there was a line-up of over 1,000 vacationers patiently waiting their turn to climb Mt. Yatsutake, a peak, which although just under 10,000 feet in height, presents some difficulties from a technical Alpinist point of view. If anyone imagined that he was getting off on a solitary mountain-climbing expedition, an expectation not at all unreasonable in view of the difficulty of the climb and the distance of the mountain from populated centres, he must have been sadly disappointed.

The trouble is that Japan is just too small to contain the bounding enthusiasm of its vacationers—and all of its 90,000,000 inhabitants are determined vacationers. Or that too many people are reading about the places where one can get away from people, so that when all of the people who are trying to "get away from people" run into each other, you get the kind of traffic jam they had at Mt. Yatsutake last year. Last winter I went skiing at a place that was reached only after eight hours by train, two hours by bus, and finally one hour by weasel (for our inn only; visitors to other inns had to walk)—far enough off, one would have supposed, to get away from the casual skier. And yet on the Sunday I was there, there were so many people that we had to wait in line a full hour to go up the high lift. It is a little like the by-now open secret that it is best to visit Europe in the "off season"; so everybody goes in the "off season," and the distinction between "on season" and "off season" is breaking down.*

Intimate Waters

FORTUNATELY the inn that I go to is at the end of the line, so that it is spared the worst vexations of the more accessible spots, where there are shops, artificial ponds, loudspeakers, and other comforts for the one-day visitor from Tokyo. Beyond us there are only the villa of the Dai-Ichi Bank which it takes an hour to reach on foot, lumber camps, and isolated camp-sites of intrepid mountaineers. The inn nestles in a coign where two mountains run together, a river cascading down through waterfalls separating them. As if set there by some giant but casual hand, the inn spraddles the falls and then rambles on a good way downstream.

These old country inns are usually the product of many generations of slow accretion, rather than a single building effort. Every generation of owners adds some small bit—another tea-house perhaps, or another wing, or a new bath—until the inn sprawls farther and farther, up and down. The purist might protest that this process destroys unity of style, but the end result has a casual and easy charm. A variety of woods, of different texture, colour, patination, and age compete for attention; each part of the sprawling structure has its own feeling and atmosphere. So the rather nondescript *Shinyukan*—"The Intimate Waters"—quickly wraps itself

* But just recently, after I had been complaining about the spring holiday hordes on Mt. Wakakusa, the "sacred" mountain of Nara—like a mountain of living flesh, I had thought to myself—I happened to read in a 17th-century novel: "It was late spring; men felt gay and the wistaria hung like a cloud of purple over Yasui, robbing the pines of their colour. People thronged up East Mountain and turned it into a living mountain of figures."

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around the visitor, like a friendly cloak. From the moment one enters, one becomes aware of a constant accompaniment, the sound of the waterfall, that never changes, like a fixed condition of the universe. Unlike city sounds or irregular noises it has a massive steadiness that is soothing and one accepts it so completely that when it diminishes, as happens if one walks into the back corridors or rooms away from the waterfall side, one immediately wants to have it back.

The hot spring, which has never faltered for hundreds of years, is piped through a series of baths, and then through a section about thirty-five yards in length, dammed off by rocks, which is used as a swimming pool. This district, I learned from the local school teacher, who is an ardent enthusiast of the virtues of mountain life and a bit of an amateur local historian, has been famous for its hot springs for hundreds of years, and our inn started its career almost two hundred years ago. It was first a small hut, little more than an enclosure for the baths plus surrounding floor space for sleeping mats, but generation after generation new sections had been added on until now at a pinch—which means if you crowd elementary and high school students hip to hip (and they often do!)—it can hold five hundred people. As I sit here and write, there are carpenters below my room building another small addition, which will be a bath chamber looking out over the lower reaches of the river, the contribution of this generation to the slow deposits of history.

MY MAID at the inn is a ruddy and sturdy peasant girl from the next mountain valley over, and there is nothing of the rural idiot about her. Apple-cheeked, with that improbable crimson of the mountain areas of Japan that seems painted on, she is not quite so sophisticated as the bar girls I once met in Tokyo, who had read Gide and Rimbaud, but she knows the modern classics of Japan and she has much to say. It is rather lonely in winter, she admitted, although things do liven up when the skaters come, but after all it is beautiful and quiet. Television, whose tangled spires assault the peaceful mountain skyline, is however a big help. The nearest movie is in the village below, which means a one-hour trip by bus and a round-trip cost of ninety yen (about two shillings). With television she can have her entertainment without effort or expense.

And the local folk make good use of it, as I discovered the evening I was invited to watch the "pro-ress"—professional wrestling. All the houseboys and maids, and even the gnarled old man of the mountain who is in charge of charcoal making, sat there entranced like any midwestern American audience. This time, Japan's great heroes, Azumafuji—"Mt. Fuji of the East," former Grand Champion of *sumo*, 400 pounds—and Riki Dozan, a mere 300 pounds, were matched against an assortment of European and American grunt-and-groan specialists. Our little audience, like the larger one on the TV screen, went into ecstasies when Azumafuji, curiously flabby and ineffective-looking for all his enormous bulk, wrapped his huge hams around Simonovich—"the European Champion"—in a "scissors" and tried to squeeze him to death. This latter, by the way, a mere 6ft. 3 in. and 250 pounds, looked on the TV screen like some little wriggling boy somehow caught between the legs of a massively indifferent elephant. And when Riki Dozan, now a real national hero, having already received the modern form of immortalisation by film, bounded from the edge of the ring in a tag-match to explode his mighty *karate* chops against Ben Sharp—at one point managing to knock out both his opponents, the Brothers Sharp—the crowd went restrainedly wild. One could feel the delight that "our boys" were whipping these foreigners at war with the desire not to offend the foreign visitor in their midst.

It was late next afternoon when on my way down from the peaks, and turning past a sharp curve at the edge of a small forest, I came on a clearing, at the upper end of which there was a stone monument of some kind and below that the young school teacher and his favourite pupil, a bright-eyed and quick thirteen-year-old from the farm village below. I said "Good day," and then

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paused for a moment, wondering whether to make conversation or not. "What is this?" I said, pointing to the monument. The teacher bounded up eagerly. "This is a monument to Sachio, a famous poet of the Meiji Period. He used to spend a lot of time around here and he loved this area very much. It reads," he said, carefully tracing with his finger the outlines of the characters that were carved into the stone:

In Shinano there are
Eighty mountain chains
They say.
But I,
Tateshina, Goddess of the Mountains,
Wondering where
To pitch my hermitage,
Wander about searching.
The flowery moors of Heaven.

The stone, it turned out, had been erected by the admirers of the poet in 1939, at a spot he used to love. Later on I discovered that my room-maid could recite many of his poems by heart.

"I wonder if I could ask you a question," the teacher began hesitantly.

"Please," I said.

"Tell me, what is the reputation of Margaret Mitchell in America?"

I replied as conscientiously as I could.

"What about Pearl Buck?" I gave my opinion.

"Well then," he went on, "who are the great writers of America today?" I proceeded to enumerate several names, and at each he nodded. "Yes, I have read him a little. But only in translation," he said rather apologetically.

From this we proceeded to French literature. He liked the 19th-century writers best —Stendhal, Flaubert—but "naturally," as he put it, he did like Gide. And as between Camus and Sartre, he preferred Camus.

"Let me turn the tables on you now," he said. "What do you like in Japanese literature?" After my long explanation of why I found it hard to understand Ogai, he informed me that Ogai was his favourite Japanese writer. And also that Ogai's daughter was married to an artist who spent much of his time in Tateshina. "We are very good friends," he told me. "He's a wonderful and strange man who is not interested in fame, he just wants to do his painting in solitude."

The teacher, who was twenty-six years old, had been in the village for four years, ever since graduating from a Christian university in Tokyo, where he had gone from his home in the provinces. Why did he stay in such an isolated village? Because he loved the mountains and it gave him the quiet and solitude he needed. He was very "interested in literature," so he read a great deal and shared in the editing of a poetry magazine. Later he showed me several published volumes of his poetry. He and several other intellectuals of the area exchanged literary magazines among themselves and they often got together for discussions. Once a year he would go to Tokyo and take in his fill of plays, bookshops, and intellectual friends. But for the rest, he was happy enough in the mountains.

THE SON-IN-LAW of the famous writer, fiftyish and wearing a battered beret, a relic of his years as an art student in Europe when he wandered from museum to museum copying the great masters—"so that I could feel through my fingers and with my own body what they were trying to do"—led me energetically through the birch grove to his house. On each tree there was pinned a neat little sign saying, "Please do not strip my bark or I will die." Through the thinned-out forest on the left, I could see dozens of little shacks scattered about, and in a clearing at the far end, a public house with soft-drink signs and the miscellaneous advertisements that grow up like unrestrainable vines on establishments of that kind. "Pretty soon now," he said, as he noticed my puzzled glance over the scene, "I'm going to have to leave here, it's getting so built up. It's already so bad that I come here only in winter and late spring, before the crowds. In summer, I go back to Tokyo."

His house, a small western-style cabin, was dominated by huge skylights, running two

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stories in height, which transformed it into a large studio. Snow scenes and easily recognisable local landscapes filled the room in casual and dusty disarray. "My best things," he apologised, "are all in Tokyo." A litter of knick-knacks from Morocco, Hungary, Turkey, and Mexico spilled out of cabinets. In one there was a collection of catalogues from virtually every museum of Europe—all from the year 1928.

"I don't know whether I'm a great artist, I don't even know if I'm trying to become one," he told me. "In a sense I do this only for myself. Not that I have any objection to audiences—I even have one-man shows from time to time. But to me art is a solitary thing, it can come only from solitude. So many artists these days live a completely social life. I simply cannot see how they can do any serious work. At least, I wouldn't be able to.

"The main point, though, is that I feel we are all losing touch with nature. Our rhythms are no longer the vast and slow cycles of nature, but the short, nervous ones of city life. I come out here to try to retain that necessary connection with nature, to feel it through solitude. This is a precondition for creating art. Whether it will produce art or not is a different matter. The important thing is to be yourself, to express whatever it is that you are, good or bad. Later on, history will make its judgment."

All the while he was lecturing me my eye was drawn to a luminous and subtle canvas at one end of the room, by all odds the most impressive thing there. It had a familiar feel, oddly at variance in style, colour, and draftsmanship with the rest of his work. Suddenly I remembered what it was—Rembrandt's *Bathsheba*. He had prepared it on commission for a Tokyo exhibit commemorating the 350th anniversary of Rembrandt's birth. I hesitated to ask how he reconciled this laborious, detailed copymanship with his philosophy of the importance of being one's own impulsive self.

As I left the house, the loudspeakers in the centre of the village were blaring some popular song, the sounds echoing back from the surrounding mountain rim. From a nearby inn came the jangled sounds of a chorus of male voices singing early Japanese music, a white-collar workers' song club from Tokyo come to the mountains for a few days of relaxation.

One's Own Nakedness

EVERY man must come to grips with nakedness in his own way. The veranda of my room commanded a clear view of the baths and of the rock-enclosed swimming pool. Even at a distance, one could immediately distinguish the city visitors, with their fashionable bathing suits, from the local folk. The local folk would stalk out naked, their bodies slightly bent, sometimes with hand or a small, thin washcloth hung limply in front to create a slight obstruction to clear view. When the local contingent included large masses of young high school girls, the view was not, as may well be imagined, entirely unpleasant. The distance obscuring detail, one was left only with the impression of bounding and un-self-conscious youthfulness, rosy, plump bodies in joyful movement and release from the restraints of clothing, and happy young voices dimly muted. Hesitant young girls, perhaps a little more cityfied than the rest, standing uncertainly before the pool's brink as if it might be the sulphurous waters of hell itself that faced them, were finally drawn in by the enthusiastic teasing of the bolder ones. When it chanced that boys and girls were together, I noticed a strict etiquette, the boys dashing about boisterously in one part of the pool, the girls decorously splashing and giggling in another.

This vantage-point certainly offered the possibility of serious comparative observations on the nature of Japanese women (they are somewhat narrower in the hip, shorter-legged, longer-waisted, smaller in the breast, but with a smoothness of skin that is surely one of the crowning peaks in the history of feminine beauty). But I was content simply to be aware of the gentle, titillating murmur in the distance.

One day, however, at my customary time, I went to the inner baths for a wash. The

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baths here were, rather unusually for a country inn, segregated. One large pool was for men, and another, on the opposite side of a thick partition of opaque glass, was for women. When I arrived, there were two other men already there. I sat down to scrub and rinse myself on the edge of the pool, as is the usual custom. When I entered the enclosure for hot water, which is separated off from the main pool by a tile partition, the three of us exchanged a few grave comments, interspersed by long intervals of silence, as if each time coming up only with the greatest of effort from the separate universes of our private thoughts. The two men finally departed, leaving me to the pool alone.

As I basked in the hot pool, debating whether to move over to the cooler part (and then to return after a proper toning of the skin), two attractive young women walked in, each carrying a small washcloth, but otherwise entirely naked. In enthusiastic conversation with each other, they gave scarcely a glance to me, but set about vigorously scrubbing and rinsing, and then entered the larger pool. It became apparent very soon that since the hot pool was too small for the three of us, if modesty were to prevail I would have to move out in full view into the larger cold pool to allow them to enter. As they turned their eyes in another direction for a moment, I slipped out of my pool into the larger one, and the two women smoothly shifted into my former place. After a little while, they got up and left.

I was slightly disturbed by this encounter, partly because they had walked into the bath clearly labelled "Men" without any hesitation, and from the sounds of overcrowding that were coming from the neighbouring women's pool, the possibility suggested itself that others might take it into their heads to do the same. So far I had carried off the day well, having had a certain experience of mixed bathing in the past. So I decided to finish out the bath at my usual pace. This meant a few more trips back and forth between the cold and hot pools.

Just as I had succeeded in recovering my equilibrium from this visitation, I heard a suspiciously growing twitter of female voices coming from the adjacent dressing-room. I decided that I had better brazen it out or make an immediate break for it. But just as I stood up, in the midst of this indecision, the door burst open, and three ladies stood there, eager and smiling, poised as if for the 100-yard dash. Over their heads, I could see the dressing-room jammed with at least thirty women in varying stages of undress. I spun around and re-entered the pool, first concentrating on showing my coolness by an unhurried pace and then even glancing boldly, although at the same time trying not to appear too curious, at the women around me. A plump young woman with enormous melon-like breasts, her face flushed deep red, was taking some rough teasing; she had just been married. A slim, pretty girl with her hair still cut in a schoolgirl bob, stood up in all the glory of her smooth, untouched skin and gently budding breasts, and then surrendered herself to the waters. Alongside her a brassy-lunged grandmother floated face up, her dried-out breasts like loose-hanging pockets barely breaking the surface of the water. All around the edges of the pool, women hooked the backs of their necks on the ledge and let their bodies float free. One could almost hear the tension of limbs die away in the sighs and little sounds of contentment. But as more and more women came in, I decided that the time had come to beat as dignified a retreat as was possible in the circumstances. Apparently unaware that I spoke Japanese, I heard about me a disquieting current of commentary. "Look at that white skin!" "How hairy he is!"

Drawing myself up with as much coolness as I was able to muster, I turned my back slightly to the throng in order to give some cover, at the same time noting with a distressing clarity that I was *now* worried about what comments my naked back would draw from them. Repressing a frantic desire to cover my back, or my front, or anything at all, with my washcloth, I headed for the door. Another wave of women stood there, banked deeply into the dressing-room ready to come in. From the back rows a faint shrill went

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up, setting off an answering vibration in my own body.

I waited for a moment to see if they would clear an opening for me, or if they would pass quickly through the entrance into the baths. But they stood there stolidly, apparently awaiting a move from me. So with beating heart, I pushed through the crowded masses of femininity, brushing countless bodies as I went and headed for the rack with my towel and robe.

Although there were already at least thirty women in the pool, the dressing-room was still filled with another thirty or so women, undressing themselves. Once again, I was torn between panic and the need for dignity. Should I throw my robe over myself and run out, or should I continue in the proper way, drying myself off and then dressing? The decision was made for me when I heard some more tittering and several shameless suggestions, which apparently even gentle and chaste Japanese women can make when they think they are not being understood. I stood there, back turned to the group, listening to the comments and trying to finish my drying as quickly as possible and yet not give away the panic I was feeling. My body feeling as if it were dissolving in the vibrations of some gigantic motor, my ears ringing, after an eternity I finally finished, put on my robe, and walked through the masses of women, some turned away in indifference and others frankly staring at me. As I departed, I heard some more giggling and outright raucous laughter.

ONCE back in my room, the questions crowded in on me: Had I acquitted myself well? How did the women there really feel? (And secretly, I am compelled to admit, what had they thought of my body?) But enough of these unworthy speculations, I decided, let us look at the matter coolly and scientifically. The subject that proposed itself to my mind was "The Meaning of Nakedness in Japanese Society."

In traditional Japanese life, nakedness is a common thing. Men and women bathe together, country women go around bared to the breast in the heat of summer, and in general there seems to be no shortage of opportunity to see the naked human form, at least the female form. Why, then, is the strip-tease so popular in the cities? Even country people, including old ladies, will be found in large numbers in the strip-tease theatres of Tokyo. In the West, one understands that the extreme prurience about the human form makes the strip-tease a forbidden pleasure, a delightful breaking of the rules. But what can it mean to the Japanese who, any time they want to see a naked body, have only to enter the public baths? And yet the strip-tease is big business.

My only conclusion was that perhaps city people—and certainly the urban middle class—had come so far from traditional Japanese life that the strip-tease now has the same significance to them that it has in the West. For the country people and for those who still live in an essentially traditional orbit, it is clear, I think, that what attracts them is the exotic—that is, the Western—form in which nakedness is presented. It is not simply there, it is flaunted, designed to stimulate. The attraction lies in the spectacle of young, naked girls, surely otherwise a familiar sight, showing their nakedness in unexpected ways.

But I am not trying to present a sociological treatise here. I *would* like to see what the country folk of Tateshina, and especially the sixty or so women who caught me in my moment of disadvantage, have to say about Mary Matsubara, "The Bosom Kid," the strip sensation of the Nichigeki Music Hall in Tokyo. For myself, I have now acquired the certain knowledge that I can probably put up with two or three naked women, but that sixty is just too many.

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Kathleen Nott

My Life and Hard Cash

IF ROUSSEAU had tried to rewrite his *Confessions* with all the emphasis shifted from love to money, inspiration might have dried up, for of the two themes it is money which requires the greater shamelessness. Love, or anyway sexuality, is associated with lavishness: you can lie or boast about it as much as you please and the world is glad to lie or boast with you, at least in fantasy. But money-confessions, if genuine, are more likely than not to be a record of meannesses.

My impression is that nobody is quite rational on the subject. I am certainly not so myself. I have the greatest difficulty in thinking about it at all. Having to survive has made me rather more realistic as time has gone on, but as I stop now to look at my ideas and feelings about money, I see that many of them still persist from the attitude with which I began adult life: a great sense of shame at having no money and a great sense of shame at getting any, however it was acquired. I have to make money but there is nobody at present whom I have to spend it on except myself. This makes it easier to see what—apart from survival—I want it for. I doubt if anyone nowadays—except the rare and atavistic psychopath—simply wants to own money: misers, who used to flourish in literature, are outmoded, they belong to the time when there were no banks and very few consumer-commodities. And merely wanting to be rich is a fantasy. The main motives which encourage people to make money are show and some form of need for security (either personal or family). I haven't the first motive and I find in my own case that it is the second one which wants examination. As far as I can make out, my attitude towards making money is profoundly anti-social. By this I don't mean that I want to steal, to go in for fraudulent conversion or rob the widow and orphan by unethical financial operations. These activities are obviously social: they get you very much involved in other people's lives and, if we take the Mandeville view of "Private vices, public benefits," it is possible to say that they keep the whole machine working.

What I want money for is to stop me thinking tiresome thoughts, to stop me having to worry where my next meal is coming from: and of course to buy my next meal. I see that this is so, because of what I grudge and what I don't mind spending money on. I never mind spending money on food and drink, but there are many things which I enjoy—and enjoy a good deal more than these—clothes, travel, cultural objects, including books and concerts, for which I pay with qualms. There are a lot of possible reasons for this—one, which I shall go into, is having a "poor" mentality rather than a "rich" one. But all these "cultural objects" have a strong social implication. They involve you either in the physical presence or the opinions of other people, or both. Freedom in our present world is much more freedom *from* than freedom *for*, at least to many people.

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What I want money for, in short, is psychological padding. To put it in more general terms, if I were doing a daily job and won a football pool, I should give up work, not because I am lazy, but because I don't like work-relations: and work-relations of course depend on who is paying. I should feel the same, quite apart from wanting to devote myself to something else, for instance, writing poetry, the least saleable literary commodity. Nevertheless, I think it is at least possible that one of the motives in writing poetry, rather than anything else, is hatred of being involved in money-relations. In a society such as ours where almost everyone thinks of value in terms of what gets paid for, poets have a double job: they not only have the initial problem of trying to sell their poetry; they have to persuade other people that it is valuable just for the reason that they don't want to buy it. "Something that money can't buy" is one of the definitions of spiritual value, and is easily confused with something for which there is no demand.

Poets often think that they should be supported by the state. If my theory is correct this means that they want the state, not so much to pay them for writing poetry, as to see that they are not bothered by community life. I should have no objection to being supported by the state while I wrote poetry: but this aid is so improbable or, if it were forthcoming, would be so inadequate, that to think about it damages my psychological padding. I mention it because I observe an interesting change from an earlier attitude which I shall refer to later. I should not feel snobbish about having a literary pension: whereas I felt snobbish about having been educated by the state, though I had to work hard and beat other people for this.

I think I am average in disliking taxation, and not more than averagely fantastic in disliking direct taxation very much more than indirect. Noticing recently in Italy, where there is so much more obvious poverty than here, that people look more cheerful, I wondered if it is because the exorbitant taxation is nearly all indirect. There are many people who would sooner have a lingering, not too painful disease, than have a leg cut off. I used to rationalise my hatred of income tax by thinking that I objected to what it was spent on: that I couldn't earmark it for education rather than war. I would still prefer to choose what it was spent on but I know now that I should hate it in any circumstances. It seems clear that the more money one gets and therefore, theoretically, the less painful it is to pay, the more one hates direct taxation. Still dimly, but with sharpening interest if not hope, I observe the super-tax class and the attitudes they strike and their particular kind of rationalisations about, for instance, the undermining of incentive: for anything which identifies wealth with virtue and poverty with vice is at least an "objective correlative" of my own still puzzling but so deeply rooted emotional attitude. My mother, who had the "rich" mentality of which I shall have more to say, once put the matter to me in a clear light when she said of an acquaintance: "He's quite a decent fellow at heart, doesn't approve of income tax and all that."

To say that we are all irrational about money really means that it is difficult to locate a norm: it does not mean that it is necessary to go into symbolism and the psychology of the unconscious. There are so many other matters of fact and observation which cannot be dismissed: in my own case, the facts of being English and female and of having experienced a social shift. Middle-class people are anyway more shamefaced about money than either the hopeless poor or the hopelessly rich: and those who have experienced a peripety (to cover a change of fortune up or down) are probably even more so. A family history of such a change might turn out to be more typical of the present world than one thinks.

The English seem to me to be more abnormal about money than any other European nation. Their high-fed Victorian past has left them with a tremendous fantastic hangover and a sense of monetary shame which to some degree infects all classes except perhaps the extremely well-to-do. You don't notice these two symptoms of dementia

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britannica while you are growing up, in fact not till you are old enough or rich enough to get out of this country and have a look at some of the others.

It was in post-inflationary Germany that I first learnt that money was not only an all-absorbing but a decent subject of conversation. At that time I was as greatly shocked to be asked the price of everything I wore as I would have been to be asked the details of my sexual life. I also learnt at that time that there was a monetary equivalent of the doctrine of the Fall: everybody had always come down in the world. The fact that this was almost literally true in Germany did not remove its mystical significance.

The inflation revealed to everybody the totally unnatural state of money: that it was not even primarily a mechanism of exchange, in an organic relation to goods and natural wealth, but an abstract power waiting to be cornered in an arbitrary way. It is not surprising therefore that what was also revealed in a great many people was a fantastic and even a magical attitude towards money. This often took the form of believing that the Money is really There if you can only get at it. Though fantastic, this belief clearly had considerable survival-value among nations whose people were very likely to become refugees. The attitude has variants: it may mean that the Money *was* There. This variant is common in England because here so many people *have* come down in the world —and without any incentive, pleasant or unpleasant, to rise again—either as small rentiers in decay or as members of the class of honorary rich living on the psychological dividends of imperialism. It is more unproductive and depressive than the continental version, and this class—very noticeable in places like Bournemouth where I had to spend part of the war—would probably not adapt well if pushed out to Canada by war or revolution. Believing that the Money *was* There is what helps to put the topic in the same class as sex or cancer, best avoided, I suppose, because it is the Dear Departed.

There seem to be two basic mentalities, rich and poor; and which you have depends rather more on whether you believe that the money is there or not, than on the immediate circumstances of birth. A rich mentality is emotionally secure so far down that it is only shifted by a social earthquake. It is the comfortable feeling that you have the right to money and so it easily associates itself with a general sense of virtue. A poor mentality is just the opposite. Inconfident even perhaps to the point of doubting any right to continued existence, it often undermines its own prospects by being too grateful for the most limited wherewithal, however hardly earned.

My family was poor but unusual and my mother in particular had this born-rich attitude, that the Money is really There, which, alas, she did not succeed in passing on to me. To last more than a generation, a rich mentality, if founded on fact, needs an economic refresher or, if fantastic, to be put on a solid basis of cash.

My mother's attitude was aristocratic. It was not one of "If we all had our rights." Nothing was further from her thoughts than any notion of rights, for she was logical enough to see that this must include the rights of other people, a thing she couldn't admit. All she thought was that people with large ideas ought to have the wherewithal to pay for them. The attitude, even in her case, was also partly religious or magical, as if she had gone astray from financial righteousness unwittingly but would, through tribulation, find the way triumphantly home, either personally or through her children: a doctrine of predestination and the elect with no particular hopes for humanity. She could work like anything herself, but socialism—which is, after all, justification by works—was anathema to her. She combined great imagination with strong materialism. She wanted money for what it would buy: clothes, education for her children, pianos, holidays, later cars, never "tellies" or refrigerators — maybe because these struck her as merely standardised—but she wanted these things not primarily because they were useful or necessary, but because they could be exciting or even beautiful. She was as keen on gorgeousness and triumph as Tamburlaine. She certainly did not want

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money just to keep up with the Joneses: she wished to knock them into the middle of next week *where they belonged.*

IN ENGLAND you have to look at three generations to account for a given monetary personality. In the case of my mother the doctrine of the Financial Fall was not quite a family romance: there was some basis in fact for her feeling that the money was really there, her rich mentality. Her father had been a jeweller, a very clever old craftsman, working for himself, who had a certain mechanical genius. His trade was cutting sapphire compass cups for the Admiralty. Bags of sapphire cuttings left all over our house during my infancy used to make my mouth water with cupidity and I could never resign myself to the knowledge that they were actually worthless. Neither could my mother. On late winter evenings when we were safely home from school, she would take handfuls of them up to Covent Garden and return to excite us in the firelight with her glittering eyes and her accounts of tall-hatted merchants who had been about to take hansom cabs to the suburbs but had dallied with her in courteous and ceremonious converse: although, somehow, the negotiations never got any further. This was, however, a good start for making a saga out of one's money-life.

But it was a fact that the money had only recently been there. My grandfather had invented a special lathe, never patented of course, which made him able to do the work of sixteen men. Plus the labours of his enormous Victorian family, which he exploited with calm patriarchal dignity, he did remarkably well, making, during his heyday, not less than fifty pounds a week and spending it all, as far as I can make out, on food and clothing: not drink, although he liked strong Burton ale for breakfast.

Money, with my grandparents, was so merely a means of exchange for the most necessary and immediate products that their economic life was almost down to the level of barter. Not even that lowest degree of capitalist abstinence—saving for a rainy day—was reached, and anything so immaterial as amusements or holidays seems to have been missing, while education never rose above the Dame School level. This was not because any of them were stupid: they all seem to have been bursting with vitality, tricks, and cleverness.

It seems worth considering how far this obvious and immediate prosperity made it possible for the "rich" mentality to persist at least into my mother's generation, although the inquiry cannot be more than a speculation, since most of my aunts and uncles, having put themselves in some mysterious way beyond the pale, at least my mother's pale, disappeared before I knew them. My mother was always dark about this. As a child I naturally conceived of them all as the most fearful gang of thieves and murderers—and later, of sexual maniacs. For years now I have not been able for the life of me to imagine what she was talking about, or rather not talking about—and I am sure that for even more years she had no idea herself. I have a hunch that they all retained their rich mentality: but maybe a rich mentality which has dynastic aims and wants to fund itself, ought to invest in education rather than in horse-racing or conviviality. What put them outside the pale was, I suspect, the financial, not the theological version of the Fall. Perhaps it is a mercy that I never saw them in the seedy pauperdom they no doubt achieved and merited. Like the families in the comic strips, they have never aged. In imagination I still see them as a great tribe of bouncing, proud, bad-tempered, high-fed, handsome, and well-dressed beings, cluttering up and in course of time and growth practically pushing the roof off the tiny house in a slummy district from which my grandfather, laired in his forest of lathes, never thought of budging. Things must have been difficult for them all in some ways—they must have excited a good deal of envy. High-stomached is the word for the whole gang of them. My grandparents, who had come, via Liverpool, from Ireland, had an "Irish" temper in which they took a truculent and challenging pride. It is best mentioned in the

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singular because it was mainly my grandmother's temper, but they both took a pride in it: it was her cultural contribution to the household. My rooted belief that a rich mentality has one sort of temper and a poor one another, has been recently activated by reading Margaret Mead on the ritual and formal tantrums of the Manus tribes, which are certainly strongly associated with their sense of property. I myself vary between renaissance rages and an evangelical kind of sulks, which are correlated with low spirits consequent upon a low exchequer.

Although it was my grandmother who had the temper, they both struck me, as a child, as perfect monsters of pride and arrogance, and they dominated, not only their riotous and bulging house, but the most impressionable period of my imagination. They had the habit, lordly for their environment, of a joint afternoon siesta and used to shake the little jerry-built house with their combined snores. This seemed to me even then a fine rejection of the world and later I connected it with Crusaders on their tombs and much later with the monstrous death of Malte Laurids Brigge's grandfather, which also occupied an entire house. (I dare say this was a death-wish.)

My grandfather's exploitation of the labours of his growing family was natural and unquestioning, part of the way he ate his way through life. When his galumping children, high-fed and high-stomached, took it into their heads to withdraw their labour-power, he did not take the matter hard, nor did he say, I told you so, when they subsequently all went downhill. He merely dwindled. He was as passive as a caterpillar larva which had been deposited on an unusually juicy leaf.

I think he demonstrates that money is not much of an incentive, perhaps because money-making is itself a special art which demands total dedication. This may be actually hampered if you are too interested in making anything else even if it is saleable. There came a point in my grandfather's career when an American watch factory, which must have wanted his lathe, invited him to cross the Atlantic. My grandfather was in himself an unusual private example of a handicraft declining and being transmuted into mass-production. But his rich and purse-proud and every-other-kind-of-proud mentality was still based on reality. Ironically, he was a proletarian in what I believe was the original intention of the word—he felt he had a real natural wealth in his children (I am speaking in economic, not in spiritual terms). He really had something to sell: and proud and confident in his skill and his thriving and roistering troop of workers and potential workers, bursting with food and energy, he sold up and booked passages to America for the whole lot of them.

THERE were at least twelve children of whom my mother, aged about fourteen, was the eldest. Between the train and the docks—the family having somehow piled itself into two cabs—my mother led a revolt, and her cabful refused to board ship. My grandfather was used to a steady flow of work, children, money, steak, cakes, and ale, and he did not expect anything to flow backwards. The "Irish temper" vested, as I said, in my grandmother, was the only instrument which either of them had, to organise the establishment, and she used it to lash along the great fecund team of productivity and life. It was her business to produce the young and it was my grandfather's to feed them: it was theirs to keep rolling along and not to cling to skirts or get under feet; and to leave the Crusaders to their gradually lengthening slumbers. She was Nature to my grandfather's God, and she never showed the slightest wish to interfere in his particular providential aspects. Thus for different reasons neither expected any backwash, any reversal of the bountiful flow. In some ways their life might sound almost admirable, open-handed, unanxious, free from nagging, full of animal vitality; and no doubt it would be possible to describe their unthinking flow in some mystical jargon borrowed and debased from D. H. Lawrence. But the important fact was that because of the unusual skill and the unusual want of ambition which my grandfather so curiously combined, they had

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both acquired a rich mentality which they were quite satisfied to expend on their poor circumstances: admittedly the inducements to alter their way of life were infinitely less great than they would be nowadays. But they were quite unprepared for their family to have critical views or any views at all: they were like people who had never been inoculated and they went down before my mother. The cabs were turned round and they all piled into the next train. My grandfather bought another house in the same district and it all started up again.

This might be taken as merely illustrating the early development of a dominant character or on the other hand merely as a small girl's fear of homesickness. But I think it was also an early example of my mother's rich mentality, her assured carelessness towards economic prospects. Money was no object, she had realised that all it was there for (and it was and always had been there) was to buy what you wanted just when you wanted it—it might be sweets, grand pianos, or whatever you were used to in the way of emotional security. As the eldest and a female my mother was in an exceptional situation in her family. Most of the handsome rumbustious gang had inherited my grandfather's fecklessness without his ability: they were the gaping beaks which couldn't fill or even close themselves: they were never anything but great expectations with no idea of provenance. I said that my grandmother, sharing my grandfather's faith in copiousness, felt that her responsibilities ceased when she had fulfilled her own provident rôle as she did punctually every year. So that when she was not taking her siesta, all she had to do was to dress herself with stiff and heavy Victorian splendour and go out with my grandfather in his free time to show herself off to her less fortunate acquaintance (for goys, they had a surprising number of Jewish friends, I suppose because these were their only possible financial equals).

I must mention that they did spend a negligible sum on a little maid-of-all-work whom they exploited with their characteristic air of duty-well-done-and-conferring-a-favour. But apart from this very slight and harassed assistance, my mother was left from the age of twelve in sole charge of the children. This experience by no means deprived her of buoyancy and she must be given all personal credit for this, and also for the ingenuity with which she dispensed discipline to her savage throng (she was left with all the boys' mending to do while she kept guard and she used, for example, to work great mounds into the socks of those who had offended her). But what seemed like a secure economic background must have helped. Other small girls may have been left in something like her situation but usually because mother has gone out to work at something which produces no striking improvement in material comfort, so that the final result is increased general insecurity.

My mother did not have this kind of anxiety. She had far too much to do and her liberties were thus restricted: but she must have got a great sense of abundance and power. Left alone with the great herd of boys (the family ran to boys) her word was all the law she could make it. She certainly would never have condescended to call herself a proletarian, if the word had been in local use, but the idea that a proletarian was someone whose *wealth* was in his children would have tickled her highly verbal imagination: they were something to show off and make the most of. While this meant that they were a form of material property—an attitude far too deeply rooted to be conscious, but only the more influential—it also meant that she retained something of her father's craftsman's understanding of the nature of real power and wealth. You did something essential and useful to the face of nature which thereafter smiled upon you and responded with a real reward. All her values were materialistic but within the material medium, whatever it was, they were generous and creative. Many girls in her situation would have realised, as she did, the importance of money and of getting on or rather getting out, but with most of them that would have meant, at least at some stage, a fantasy of marrying riches. With my mother it was always not so much a question

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of getting on as of getting back. She felt rich and powerful and without any sense of inferiority to anyone. This rich mentality had made it unnecessary for her to marry money herself but it was, as it were, without remainder, and she had to look out for the next generation. She was determined that her children should get back *where they belonged*. (This drive has been introjected, in me, as a ghostly and bothering sense of *duty* about making money: my temperament when left alone is much more like my grandfather's.) My mother was shrewd enough to know that education was the next necessary weapon in her onslaught on what was due to her. Her children had to be well-educated, and that implied better-educated than anyone she knew or was likely to know: but she had rather vague ideas about culture and its essential disinterestedness. Vague, not lacking, is the word: for she was a great one for wonder, and I myself, as a child, was a great one for popular science. I gobbled everything I could on the subject, and gabbled and garbled it back to her. And together we goggled and boggled at the starry universe with its mysteriousness but also its unarguable pomp and prestige.

One thing which cannot be bought for spot cash is a rich mentality. You cannot be educated either back or onwards to the world of magic and Tamburlaine in one generation. It takes not less than two to get—or lose—the feeling that the Money is There. It may be said that this is only a question of acquiring self-confidence and the material and cultural objects which embody it. But the acquirements depend in the first place upon money and in the second upon the faith that we know where it came from and where it is going to—in short, that it is and will continue to be there. And the second-generation child who has moved into money has always witnessed a money-anxious parent.

Successful labour leaders can and do provide their offspring with the first step towards it—a snob education—but not with the rich mentality itself. And the offspring, in my experience, never seem to be quite at home with their material and cultural acquirements: that is to use "cultural" in the narrower sense of intellectual or artistic. It looks as if the first thing they buy is the lighter social approval of their new group by conforming to and even competing with, the drink and food, the travel and play-habits: and social guilt may divide them from their pleasures so that they may deprecate or pretend to deprecate their advantages or punish themselves by not enjoying them.

There is a reverse side to all this. You may have gone through the required number of generations to have your rich mentality and yet be at a loss or self-deceptive about what to spend it on. "Culture" requires both guiltless leisure and disinterestedness: it is a matter of ethics as well as taste. It would be nice to know who has achieved the right kind of balance (in the mind as well as the bank) for all this: three generations even of solid money don't always do it; sometimes they only achieve a delusion that you can buy both brains and virtue, as well as the appearance of them. And, for instance, the social guilt so strongly in the air in our century, sometimes forces the rich to try and buy the virtues of the poor—particularly the appearance of being busy which is confused with work and the virtue of industry.

It is more instructive to look at present social change in terms of money rather than of houses going over to the National Trust, because it gives you a clearer idea of what people want. Judging by the behaviour of those passing each other on the financial escalators, what you are really trying to buy first and last is the freedom from thinking about money, and this is obviously something which you cannot attain while you are busy making it. It is this state of mind which, whatever they call it, enlightened and self-sacrificing parents are trying to buy for their offspring. It cannot be acquired by passing examinations or by qualifying for what used to be the Ivory Tower professions. Once it was learned at the older public schools but only as part of the freedom from thinking about anything, including social change: as a

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capacity, that is, to ignore the particular claims to attention of anything which looked as though it ought to be ruled, other races, the working classes, and women. Anyway, here too, time always was of the essence; you had to be entered from birth, which is the same as "having chosen rich grandparents."

The fact that the psychological advantages of a public school leading to one of the older universities cannot be telescoped, may account in part for the anger of the Angry Young Men, the Outsiders and the Lucky Jims. A great many of them have been educated at the cost of the state without necessarily becoming any fonder of the state or indeed of an egalitarian society. I was so educated myself and rationalised my sense of inferiority to the University of Oxford into such fierce disapproval that it seriously affected my studies. Observation both of myself and of other people makes me believe that hardly anyone wants by nature to be equal, either financially or emotionally — certainly not enough people to make the notion of absolute equality either possible or meaningful. I think that a few people don't mind being inferior or even genuinely prefer it, because irresponsibility or even slavery confer some sort of security. But seeing a scrum, most healthy people prefer to be on top: and in the matter of education or culture this is genuinely awkward because these satisfactions really do disappear if they cannot be disinterested. Perhaps the Angry Young Men (if they really exist anywhere else but in the newspapers) could only be satisfied by something totally impossible, the reversal of Time's Arrow: by having a stretch of the past grafted into their systems which was so splendidly vintage that it included its own self-contempt and enabled them to act with a class-detachment to rival Burgess and Maclean. I don't know what is to be done about their salvation—or the world's. We all know how hard it is for a rich man to get into the Kingdom of Heaven: and that is on the assumption that the rich man wants to get there. How much harder it is for a poor man, because he can scarcely help wanting first of all to try being rich!

If you are poor and want your child to struggle and get on, to climb up the next money-ledge and hang on and climb some more, I don't see how you can teach it to be loving, nice, and humble at the same time: you are much more likely to teach the nicer ones an agonising split between their past and their future. I think it is true that "It's the poor what helps the poor": there is often among poor people a warmth of contact which makes the better-off look like a different species. But in my experience, this applies much more to the past generation than the present, because the present and rising generations are occupied, quite understandably, in stopping being poor. It is the unwillingness to recognise this which probably accounts for the lack of really good "proletarian" novels. For a struggling poor hero has to be shown as primarily idealistic (more conscious of his class than of his ego) and at least trying to take in his class-fellows with him on his upward move. Aristotle would have described this as a "possible improbability" and therefore an inferior type of action. The lack of money and the determination to get it make people aggressive and hence at worst inclined to projections and paranoia and at best inclined to stabilise their security at a purely material level, to convert their creative drive into cars and television sets. None of the dominant philosophies, old or new, pay enough attention to what it actually feels like to be a poor man. The Marxist reason for this split between the abstract and the concrete might be the soundest, if taken paradoxically—that philosophers, including Marxists, are either members of the ruling classes or unconsciously identified with them. As a psychology and ethic, Marxism is more suited to a rich than a poor mentality: an illustration is provided by the constant present complaints of the comparatively well-to-do about the unwillingness of proletarians to do an honest day's work. Their appeal to some ideal standard of the past is of course an attempt to impose an ethic of their own on people whose concrete living situation is so different as to be almost incomprehensible to them. It would, however, be logical for a

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rich man to say, There is a class-struggle, and I am on the other side.

IT IS particularly odd that the Freudian and Jungian schools do not offer any serious description of the psychology of actual poverty, since they recognise that money plays an important part in restoring the patient's health and maintaining the analyst's. Maybe on second thoughts this is not so odd, and the reason is that practitioners do not often see a case of poverty. But this might be why we lack an adequate account of something which strikes me as significant in modern community life—an actual opposition which exists between Money and Love, the feeling which many people have while travelling up the economic escalator, that they have to choose between them: and the account is also lacking somewhere else where we might expect to find it—in contemporary literature. In the so-called picaresque novels, the economic adventures may be comparatively convincing, but the amatory adventures all seem to be undertaken with pin-up girls who haven't even been taken down from the walls.

Most of the psychological theories tend to treat the monetary situation as though it were static, whereas what is striking about a monetary economy is the possibility of social shift with accompanying psychological disturbances: what seems to be important is not money, even if by that we mean genuine purchasing-power, but status, the relative conditions of being rich or poor. This would be better covered by an anthropological description which looked at the rich and poor not as "Two Nations" but two cultures. A community where many sections still claim to be in a continuing Christian tradition and others claim that we ought to be, might then be seen to be swarming with Old Testament mentalities. A poor mentality especially when travelling up the escalator, tends to be puritanical, an attitude which is only disguised in some cases by an aggressive and competitive sexuality: underneath there remains a rigid and obsessive sexual code, especially for women, which with its doctrine of material stain and its recognised tariff system for sin, strikes one as archaic and even Hebraic.

My mother had some of this Old Testament mentality and had made the puritanical choice between money and love. She understood tribal bonds and was savagely devoted to her brood, but she thought and—quite genially—used to say, that love was a bit silly: alternately, and perhaps this really meant the same thing—that it was suitable for men and not for women. I must repeat, however, that the persistence in her of a rich mentality always complicates any generalisation about her character: so that though she may be partly accounted for by an Old Testament puritanism, some of the same manifestations may have been due to the avoidance of the lowering and—as she would say—"poverty-stricken" aspects of Christianity. She liked vivid language and she was full of quotations from all the great works which have influenced common speech, but she had the knack of adapting the New Testament to her own temperament. "Vengeance is mine," she would say, and the statement would be left hanging. "Consider the lilies," she remarked, on another occasion, her gaze resting sombrely on an over-dressed and over-made-up young woman. "You don't get that way by toiling and spinning." Or, "Blessed are the meek," she would surprisingly announce, and a meaningful pause would give a totally new twist to "For they shall inherit the earth."

She had what used to be called the Dual Standard not only about love but about money—a tolerance towards the foolishness of men in this respect, which failed sometimes, but more in bewilderment than irritation. My father was a clever, dreamy man with a genius for muddle: I mean that in my opinion the muddle was the way he kept the monetary upper-hand, having seen that all other more direct methods were bound to fail. Goodness knows what he did with his money, my mother did not. She said so often that it couldn't be women that I suspect she thought it was. However, my own explanation is more likely. The relative emancipation of women nowadays seems to me to reveal

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conclusively what the situation between the sexes has always been. It is not that men were once men and are no longer, it is that they once had secure control of the purse-strings but, even if they still have, are doubtful now whether they should.

My mother's departmentalism affected me at an early age, in particular about the monetary situation of the female. I never liked being dependent on a husband but am guilty about earning money of my own, and only now in middle life can I cross the threshold of my bank without qualms, which have nothing much to do with the state of my overdraft. Deeply rooted is the childish feeling that I ought not to have any money. I have managed to deal with this rationally by earning what I can—or at least writing stuff that gets paid for—but I am never far from rationalisations and magic even now. And my theories which have a rational explanation always retain a thread of the fantastic. For example, my vacuum theory of finance has been a great comfort to me: this is that when you are short of money you spend what you have, thereby creating a vacuum so that more must flow into the hole. What is chiefly wrong with this theory is that like all magic it doesn't work often enough. But as a description of psychological fact it is not totally absurd: there is some connection between getting money and wanting it, or not being able to want it; a rich mentality is a help if only as an orientation of interest.

This background history of one individual might suggest that psychological explanations still have the greatest cogency: but they must be based on early fact rather than on primordial fantasy. Living with a rich mentality—a forceful character with great expectations—when one is actually poor, may make one anxious about success and achievement when by nature one would prefer to be lazy. And though I would agree that there are important differences between men and women in attitude towards money, I think they are chiefly a matter of degree: women are more likely to be fumbling and irrational about getting it for themselves. But the symbolic and racial descriptions of people's attitudes do not sufficiently account for the ways they are actually forced to behave. Or conversely it is a case for Occam's razor—there is already enough in one's earliest factual experience, especially if one's family history covers a period of shift between classes, to account for any amount of anxiety and guilt. A successful society based on a monetary economy would have to ensure three things: that nobody was actually poor, that is, that your money bought you enough to live on: that nobody felt disagreeably poor in relation to other people: and that nobody felt dangerously thwarted because there were no other people poorer than himself. What is wanted is a "phenomenological" psychology of money: this autobiographical description of the hop between the Two Cultures is meant as a minor contribution.

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Carol

I WALKED by a window in Ireland
When it was Christmas evening
And a long dark rain was falling.
I heard some fishermen singing
A rant of the old days gone
Down and the seadogs drowning.
I heard the bird of the morning
Cry out at a wrong time
And was it the word of warning
He cried—was it the same
Dark long rain of a crime
I felt in my sinnermost heart
Against this Christian time?
The dead men walk the streets
And do not know they are me:
You are the seadog that struts
His skeleton up from the sea:
And arm in arm we go strolling
From house to house and from
Locked door to barred door
Knocking at every home
And ask at each one for
A hand through the bolted door
A heart through the latched breast
And a little love in the hand
To let our spirits rest.
Not at that Christian time
A dead dog and I received
Not a hard board, not bread
At any outstretched hand,
Not on that Christmas evening
The living or the dead
Were listened to, nor loved,
Were neither seen or received.
And the bird of dawn sang on
As if its breast was broken,
For never a loving word
Have we ever really heard,
Or ever spoken.

George Barker

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FROM THE OTHER SHORE

ITEMS:—A competitive prize of 100,000 roubles has been offered for a new Soviet National Anthem. The melody of the present anthem, which replaced the Internationale, is still played; but the text, which extols Stalin, has been discarded.... A commission has been formed in Moscow to publish the works of Boris Pilnyak (1894–1938?). After being subjected to constant persecution for publishing, in 1926, "The Tale of an Unextinguished Moon," which alluded to Stalin's responsibility for the death of the Soviet C.-in-C., Mikhail Frunze, Pilnyak disappeared in the Great Purge.... Another commission will deal with the literary heritage of Alexander Voronsky, the editor of *Krasnaya Nov* ("Red Virgin Soil"), founded in 1921 at Gorky's suggestion and with Lenin's blessing. Until its liquidation in 1927, it was a rallying point for older writers and for the original "fellow-travellers." Soon after Pilnyak's story appeared in it, Voronsky was expelled from the Party; he disappeared at the time of the Radek-Piatakov trial....

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PAUL IGNOTUS *writes on recent developments in Hungary:*—The cultural policy of the Communist Government in Budapest since the defeat of the revolution has been dual: there is an effort at window-dressing and another at sheer revenge. These two tendencies are sometimes complementary and more often—and more obviously—conflicting. They are complementary in so far as both correspond to the nature of the present terror system, which differs significantly from that of the Stalinist period. Stalinism, in particular during its peak period (1949–53), meant the dictatorship of the thugs and snoopers of the Hungarian political police who wanted to be more Russian than the Russians themselves. Krushchevism, as imposed on Hungary since December 1956, means the dictatorship of the Russian military, pure and simple. Rakosi had the mass support of the sadists. Kadar has no mass support whatever. Rakosi's (that is Stalin's and Zhdanov's) literary policy was one of streamlined indoctrination, utopian mass-hypnosis, intellectual *Gleichschaltung*. Kadar's policy, or rather the policy of his Soviet masters today, is that of a general who has occupied a foreign country and does not very much meddle with the artistic notions of the subjugated natives so long as they do not interfere with his orders, but slaughters them without mercy once they do dare to interfere. The literary world in Hungary enjoys, in a way, much greater freedom than it did four or five years ago; but in other ways is like a village just ordered to be burnt to ashes by the infuriated conqueror.

"Socialist realism" is no longer compulsory. Western authors are no longer banned from the libraries and the stage. Gestures suggesting a wish for *rapprochement* with the West in literary, scientific, and artistic matters have frequently been made. In Rakosi's time, the P.E.N. Club was not allowed to exist. Today it is ordered to exist though no one knows what it should do. Some of the sinister exponents of the sycophantic-denunciatory style which was prevalent in the Rakosi era have disappeared from the literary scene or have been pushed into the background: the most diehard of the Stalinist authors, Sandor Gergely, has not so far emerged since the revolution. In their stead, less characteristic and more respectable figureheads are being used if they can be found. The theatres, for some months after the revolution, gave more attention to the most typical "bourgeois" playwright, Ferenc Molnar, than had ever been granted to him even in pre-Communist times. The authors awarded the Kossuth prize this year were without exception known to be non-Communists. And some, if not many, really good books have been published by Hungarian authors—mainly, it is true, from amongst those prepared for publication in the pre-revolutionary "thaw" period, but these have been printed apparently without alteration.

Simultaneously, however, a drive was started by Government circles to stop this excess of liberalism. Premier Kadar himself denounced the publishing house, "Magveto," for daring to print a collection of poems by the young poet Istvan Eörsi, who at the time was waiting to be tried for incitement against the occupying forces. The director of that publishing house, Geza

This column, containing reports on cultural news and trends in the Communist world, is edited by Leopold Labedz.

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Hegedus, was sacked at once. The production of Molnar plays has also been decreased. The former ideological dictator of Stalinist Hungary, Jozsef Revai, who was given some space in the newspapers to attack the present régime because of its ideological "colourlessness," launched a campaign for intellectual re-Stalinisation. For a while after the defeat of the revolution, a play by one of the recent Kossuth prize winners, Laszlo Nemeth, dealing with the Austrian enslavement of Hungary after 1849, was performed with great success on the Budapest stage. But as the audience gave rather too enthusiastic applause to the Hungarian freedom fighters defying "Austrian" tyranny, it was quickly discovered that the play contained "an outdated version of patriotism," and it was banned. Altogether it is clear that a fight is going on amongst the present top Communists, between those who consider literary and artistic liberalism as a suitable counter-weight to the military terror and those who feel such window-dressing contains more potential dangers than benefits.

As to the terrorist aspect of the present cultural régime, it can hardly be described otherwise than by the enumeration of acts carried out by the police, by the Government office which controls the police, and by the judges who are controlled by the police. The associations of Hungarian writers and Hungarian journalists are banned. The weeklies and periodicals which used to be their mouthpieces have also been banned; and the famous weekly *Irodalmi Ujsag* is now published in London. A great number of writers have been arrested: some of them have already been tried and others are perhaps never going to be tried. Some very well-known writers whose names I should not like to disclose have undergone "nervous collapse" after being interrogated, and are in institutions corresponding to lunatic asylums; some of the arrested journalists are, for the same reason, in the prison hospital. Most persecuted are the former Communists (or let us say Gomulka-like Communists) who joined the movement of Imre Nagy. The campaign of revenge against them is merciless and is increasing day by day.

Arrested are: Tibor Dery, sixty-two years of age, not only celebrated some ten years ago as a leading Communist author of Hungary but perhaps the only one in this category whose artistic merits were always recognised by all literary critics; Gyula Hay, playwright, once a great success in Weimar Germany and in Soviet Russia, as well as in other countries, later a vice-president of the Hungarian Writers' Association; Zolton Zelk, poet, in his middle forties, once an author of a Stalin ode for which he was practically idolised by the fanatics and who later turned against his own past in a frantic fit of remorse: "How I hate that poem about Stalin," he once told me, "exactly because I know that there are some really good verses in it." Such journalists of literary standing as Haraszt, Losonczy, Gimes, Tardos, and recently the essayist Istvan Bibo, have shared the same fate. The young stage producer Gabor Foldes was not long ago sentenced to death. Most shocking was the recent case of the young playwright Jozsef Gali and the young journalist Gyula Obersovszky (both former Communist Party members) who were, for publishing a pamphlet, first sentenced to an imprisonment of one and three years respectively but then—on the same evidence and admittedly for political reasons—to death. The uproar of the Western intellectual world—with Aragon and Picasso joining the protests—has resulted in a commutation of their death penalties to fifteen years and life imprisonment respectively. The rest may or may not be guessed: what is certain is that the fate of Hungarian letters nowadays is mainly being decided in law courts and prison cells.

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THE doctrine of "Let all flowers bloom, let diverse schools of thought contend" was announced by Mao Tse-tung on 2nd May, 1956. Since then, the new line has certainly reinvigorated critical attitudes, and some Chinese writers have gone far beyond the officially-prescribed framework. The most famous among them is a young novelist, Wang Meng, whose short story "Young Newcomer to the Organisation Department" became a subject of controversy very much as did Dudintsev's novel in Russia. Wang Meng's novel was censored by the editorial board of the magazine in which it was published; but the censorship itself was criticised at a meeting of the Chinese Writers' Union in Peking held in May. Wang Meng, like Dudintsev, exposed the bureaucratisation of the Party cadres. His hero, a young Party worker, Lin Chen, becomes involved in a struggle with his superiors to correct their "bureaucratic errors." As Wang Meng puts it: "The occupational disease of a cook is that he has little taste for good food. Food is what he makes and all day he is in contact with it. As for us, the Party workers, we create the new life and as a result this new life fails to excite us." Like Lopatkin, the hero of *Not by Bread Alone*, Lin Chen was criticised by Communist critics for "individualism." There are, however, subtle differences in the approach of the Soviet and Chinese critics of these two young writers. Lopatkin's fault was said to be the fact that he did not seek the support of the Party. Lin Chen, on the other hand, is criticised for not trying to draw his strength from contact "with the masses"; he relies only on the sympathy of his girl-friend. In both cases, it is "socialist realism"

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which is invoked. But in China, unlike Russia, contradictions between the Party and the masses are now recognised (though the Party remains the sole judge as to which of these contradictions are "non-antagonistic"). And Wang Meng, unlike Dudintsev, has so far been receiving official support against his neo-Stalinist critics.

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AN interesting phenomenon in Poland today is the attempt to use the Chinese Communists to counteract Soviet pressure. From the beginning, Polish writers and journalists have enthusiastically used Mao's doctrine of "the hundred flowers" as a weapon against Soviet ideological encroachment. Not since the Physiocrats have a body of European intellectuals been so fascinated by China.

While looking to the East for a counterweight to Soviet pressure, Polish intellectuals continue to look to the West for cultural contacts. Among the Western authors recently published are Kafka, Camus, Faulkner, Hemingway, Caldwell, Steinbeck, Mauriac, Maurois, Malraux, Sartre. A literary magazine, *Europe*, is about to appear. Among scholarly works, Keynes' *General Theory* has been translated into Polish. Western publications and periodicals are on sale at certain news stands despite some tightening of the internal censorship. It is this censorship that accounts for the silence of the Polish press on the resolution of the Polish Writers' Union of 14th June, condemning the persecution of the Hungarian writers.

•

ONE of the poems in the first volume of the "non-conforming" anthology, *Literaturnaya Moskva*, "The Morning," by R. Rozhdestvenski, has received the attention of the *Literary Gazette*, which provided the following key to its significance for the benefit of its less alert readers:

"The poem has an allegorical character but its meaning is quite clear. If one believes the author, it is only now that daylight is beginning to appear; until recently dark night reigned over our life. It was embodied in a dreadful society which subordinated people to its undivided power and compelled them to be its servants and nothing else. Now, when people have been aroused by daylight breaking in, 'the night boiling with anger,' scoldingly remarks:

'You were marching without a quarrel with
my truth
Even though cautiously and slowly
I deliberately
became
darker
To shield your conscience from torment,
To prevent you from reproaching yourselves . . .
Were you perchance not happy?
Were you talking about it then?'"

Even more outspoken is a short poem by Gevork Emin, published in *Sovietakan Grakanutian* ("Soviet Literature"), the organ of the Writers' Union of the Armenian Soviet Republic. He addresses an "elder Party member" with these words:

Be silent: you don't frighten me any more.
Don't bring up again your quotations
And lying pledges in the name of our century.

and he anticipates the reaction:

. . . And again using your strong-arm methods
And covering your face with a rag of old slogans,
You try to destroy what we are trying to create.

The editorial article in the next number of *Sovietakan Grakanutian* (January, 1957) sharply attacked the poem and admitted that "the editorial board had made a gross mistake in publishing it."

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THE Turkish Communist poet, Nazim Hikmet, living since 1951 in the U.S.S.R., has written a satirical comedy, *Did Ivan Ivanovich Really Exist?* The theme of the comedy is the influence of the "cult of personality" on the local Party secretary, comrade Petrov. Using flattery and reasons of state as arguments, the villain of the piece, Ivan Ivanovich, diabolically persuades Petrov to exploit his office in order to acquire personal privileges and to enhance his personal status. The secretary ends by believing in his own omniscience: "I know everything and I understand everything." Asked about astronomy, he replies: "When observing various stars one should not observe any one of them for too long. This is a grave error and many of our astronomers have committed it. In the sector of astronomy it is necessary to fix high targets and to obtain grand results, which will inspire further efforts." His underlings are writing monographs on such themes as: "The importance of punctuation in the aphorisms of comrade Petrov." Finally, he is summoned to Moscow. His conversation with his superior, Konstantin Sergeevich, consists of an exchange of infinite verbs devoid of any meaning. It is ended by the intervention of a symbolic "man in a cloth-cap" who cuts it short: "And now, comrades, enough of this comedy!"

The authorities were of the same opinion. After a very successful first night at the Satirical Theatre in Moscow, it was withdrawn.

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Stephen Spender

Engaged in Writing

A Short Novel: Part II

V

ON GOOD FRIDAY, in San Marco, Olim Asphalt was one of a great crowd of tourists. Standing at the edge, he watched them all, including himself in the spectacle. In their clothes like photographs in newspapers or fashion magazines, they looked two-dimensional as hoardings. The pavemented floor on which they stood was uneven, imitating the Adriatic seeping through and far beneath which, through the centuries, had sculpted the flagstones after its wave-curved form.

The tourists formed the two horns of a large crescent shadow closing on the altar, whose encrusted jewels shone with reflections from massed candles. Above their heads, the brassy light entered the pits of arches and the concavities of domes, from whose apices wings and faces bent, looking down on the modern travellers through argus-eyed mosaic.

It seemed as though sheets of gold-foil were slowly, perpetually falling, twisting through the atmosphere of incense, flecking lights on walls and pillars. A gleaming canopy, like the cover of a great dish, enclosed and domed the ghostly crowd.

At the altar, priests in white satin and gold brocade, vestments that removed them from contemporary shadows as if they had been visitors from Mars, stiffly performed their antique ceremony. To Olim, on the edge of things, their masque looked like the play within the play in *Hamlet*. Did it explain the plot of the conference table, the speeches and folly? Priests, attended by their acolytes, made their grave gestures one to another, which communicated nothing to him: he was content for their significance to be as remote as interplanetary signals through space.

Machine run on Holy Spirit. Spirit, *essence*, ghost, multiple meanings. *Bank of the Holy Spirit*. Idle siftings interrupted by his noticing Pobedin on the far side of the altar almost exactly opposite where he, on his side, was standing. Under their tufted eyebrows, the elderly Russian writer's eyes reflected the glow of the candle-blaze as though he were receiving the flutter of dove's wings. That Pobedin should be there looking like a hermit or ascetic standing at the entrance of his cave in some Spanish painting of ecstasy, was perhaps an accident of dim religious light. Or perhaps it in some way explained the mystery of his survival, just as Korovin's might be connected with his pre-adolescent look. At any rate, it was difficult to believe that Pobedin was experiencing a conversion as he gazed at the priest-gyrating altar.

When, at the end of the service, the crowd dispersed, Olim followed Pobedin. They met near the main door under a vast mosaic of the Last Judgement. Their heads were just below the deepest part of hell. They found themselves beneath the damning and the damned, so low in a bottomless pit that the forks of demons jabbed harmlessly above their heads.

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On this fringe of the congregation, the crowd talked touristically and unabashed, aware that this was a "catholic" thing to do, so it was easy, while they were still under the spell of the service, to ask Pobedin how it impressed him. "I understand such ceremonies very well," he said gravely, in his professorial German. "I had a religious upbringing, and my uncle was a priest of the Orthodox Church." He looked at Olim from the full distance of his gaze across steppes and forests. "What do you think of it now? Does it make you at all nostalgic?" Pobedin reflected on this, with his air of portentousness. "What moves me is to think of the tragedy! All this money and effort spent on deceiving the people, when so much good could be done if it were used on constructive tasks."

Olim wanted to howl: or else put to him some frightful question out of a wild dream, something whose obviousness made it almost unthinkable: "Has your religion done more for the unfortunate?"

Instead, he pointed out one of his favourite objects in Venice: outside the porch, the 14th century red granite group called "The meeting of the Moors," of Syrian or Egyptian warriors each with left hand on a bird-headed sheathed sword, who, with his right, embraces another. Pobedin, mild, responsive to beauty, admired the sculpture, and they walked across to the Doges' Palace for their morning meeting.

THE CONFERENCE was now in its fifth day. The table resembled the scene above a ship-wreck, afloat with objects thrown up and around: papers, ink-stands, bottles, sticks and spars, oddments of timber. Passing the place where Borès sat, Olim glanced at a proof lying on the table in front of his empty chair.

The lines that caught his eye ran as follows:

September 30. We were taken to the little town of Kissegesvar on the beautiful Budoske shore. Entertained by peasants, smiling, and strikingly clean (one remem-

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bers the days when soap was unobtainable in this corner of Eastern Europe) who, dressed in traditional costumes, danced their traditional folk dances for us. These, which had become almost forgotten under the old régime, have been revived thanks to the efforts of Professor Laubermann (a refugee from Hitler's Germany who has made his home in Pest). The peasants in rediscovering them, have, through revolution, reaffirmed what was most vital to their traditional way of life. Where there was a casino, a factory for making glazed tiles is now . . .

Just then, Borès himself, last-comer, arrived. They sat down. At the head of the table, Bonvolio, perspiring, looked like the leader of an endurance test, a captain pointing to the survivors a hypothetical shore, one who recites Tennyson: *"Courage," he said, and pointed toward the land.*

None of the intellectuals more resembled survivors who had taken to their little boat and were enduring, on an endless expanse of ocean, the agonies of thirst and their parching rations, than the Russians, after four or five days spent listening to Sarret. They had always made it clear that they did not consider this ideological journey necessary. They thought there was nothing really to discuss. One either disagreed, in which case there was no point in meeting, or one agreed, in which case there was no point in discussing. They longed to reach the island of Bonvolismus, the course which had been charted so eloquently by the chairman in his opening speech. During the past two days, Boris Pomyalov had been repeating ever more urgently his simple message: "Let us agree about culture, which we all love, and let us forget about politics which we all disagree about." With his ragged black hair and his look of having a black patch over one eye, he resembled more one of Marteau's Universals, pirating between lines, than one excluded from mutual understandings by Sarretian gulfs.

All the same land could hardly be reached without some attempt by the Russians to work their passage out of the position of ideological exclusiveness in which Sarret had fixed them. Sarret had, as it were, allotted them all the rowlocks on the port side of the boat, and unless they either refused to accept this position or else pulled against the bourgeoisie at starboard, not all Bonvolio's steering would prevent the boat going round in circles.

Conscious of the gravity of the situation, Pobedin, grey and tense, got up to say that he was prepared at last to speak for himself and his colleagues. Within a very few minutes he had demolished the ideological ingenuities of Sarret with his own irrefutable ponderosities. For what he showed beyond doubt was that the great army of the banal, the dull, the conventional, and the boring, includes all sides. Wherever the ideas laid down by society are accepted without dispute, wherever no convention of communal thinking is challenged, there Pobedin pitched his tent and gazed across dividing plains of warring armies with eyes burning like the two quietest stars in the universe. His the faith of those who know that the conventional is more important than the convention, and the convention than the standard that establishes it. So, however ideologies divide, he was with those who accept unquestioningly the social creed within which, on either side, the convention-loving dwell. No frontier could interrupt his profound spiritual kinship with those of whatever side, time, or place, who accept views laid down by the authorities.

His speech, therefore, appealed to people, wherever they be, who recognise the simple worth of repeating what has been said dogmatically already a hundred times before. The only awkwardness was that he had to get out of the ideological ditch dug for him and his colleagues by Sarret. This meant that he had to arrive at an agreeing-to-disagree agreement with Sarret. He therefore began by expressing his profound regret that he had to disagree when M. Sarret said that there were tremendous divisions between East and West, within M. Sarret's definition of the term Engagement as *an undertaking to enter into a point of view the contrary of that ideologically his own.* "The word Engage-

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ment," said Pobedin, "simply does not exist in my country, both the concept and the word itself are untranslateable."

At this Sarret sat up hopefully, exclaiming, "Ah!" as though to shout: "Eureka! The gulf!" But Pobedin quickly confused this gleam with a great dull fog of making different things the same. "Instead of engagement," he said, "We in Russia have the concept of responsibility, which is the same thing —Russian writers have always been responsible. This has nothing to do with ideology. Russian writers were in the past socially responsible. They are responsible today. They will be responsible tomorrow. Tolstoy was responsible, Dostoyevsky was very responsible, so was Pushkin, and so, in a different way, was Tchekhov. They all felt that each, in his separate manner, had a duty to observe toward society," Pobedin went on solemnly.

He then outlined the orthodox view, repeated for twenty years by every Communist literary critic, of the difference between what he called "Western individualist responsibility" and Russian, "truly traditionalist responsibility of the individual towards the tasks of society." Sarret was deflated, and Pobedin, like a steam-roller, went flattening on. He now described what everyone present recognised as the conventional exception to the conventional orthodoxy. "There was, many years ago," he said, as though revealing for the first time some fearful confidence, "difference of opinion as to whether the Soviet writer should be responsible to some particular publishing house, or to some larger organisation—the Party or the State." Having revealed this gigantic schism, he looked up and across the table as though scanning the ever-opening future, and pronounced: "After the revolution, and, indeed, until quite recently, the tasks of Soviet literature were to instruct the masses. Today, however, the stage of widespread public instruction has passed, and literature instead of being concerned with spreading wide, has begun to go deep." There was one other subject which had been brought up in the Conference to which he ought to devote a word, he added, gravely as a bishop or headmaster mentioning sex. "That is the matter of Social Realism. In the Soviet Union this offers no problem, I am convinced. The Soviet Writer has roots in the lives of the people because he lives in the Socialist Society. Therefore he cannot help being a Social Realist. I am sure that all Russian intellectuals agree about this. Since, even under the Czars, Russian writers have always been very socially conscious, Socialism, in transforming this social consciousness, has also inherited it as a tradition."

SARRET, after his despair, followed by the moment of hope in which he thought the gulf had been made manifest, was now simply exasperated. Marteau had an expression which clearly said: *"Quelle blague!"* Dunstan Curlew clasped his hands in front of him and bowed his great head like one who, although himself a bishop, finds listening to pietistic utterances the greatest trial put on him by his faith. Botov stared blankly across the table, grasping a pencil tightly in one hand. Sereno—Sereno had the most surprising reaction. He sat bolt upright and followed Pobedin's words with a flushed, attentive expression.

Any hope the French might still have that their Soviet colleagues were going to discuss anything, were now finally quenched by the idealistic, sentimental Korovin. He lifted up his head, thatched with mossy hair, and with shining eyes produced thoughts that might have proceeded from the mouth of some leprechaun brought into an early 19th-century drawing-room from the Scottish Highlands or the Irish Fens: one who, untouched by the march of time, watched sheep and drank from pure streams. He had a wide mouth, curved back round his face at the edges, and when he spoke the effect was of a charming carven elf who gushes one pellucid trickle contributing to the whole battery of massed fountains. While Korovin was speaking, Sarret's mouth fell open as if to exclaim—*"Merde!"* Whatever it was, the wordless expression lacked the unsulliedness of Korovin's stream. Korovin was now saying: "I agree with all my colleague has said about Dos-

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toyevsky, Tolstoy, and Tchekhov. I would like to add to their names those of the glorious ones of Goethe, Shakespeare, and Byron: and since we are in Italy, also Dante. The good and the beautiful are means for ever accessible to us all, whereby we can unite ourselves in spirit with the past. There is a sense in which we Russians feel that not only Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, but also Goethe and Shakespeare, are contemporaries of our comrades who are members of our organisations of writers and intellectuals."

Boris Pomyalov contributed some tough figures about the immense membership of the Soviet writers' organisations and the yet more immense sales of their books.

SERENO turned his head towards Bonvolio and slightly raised one hand. This produced a silence which lasted for some seconds, broken at first only by a slight "ah!" from Sereno, a kind of uttered pause which took in what had just been said and anticipated what was to come. His delivery, like that of everyone there not French, was influenced by the fact that he had to speak in a language foreign to him. Having spent much of his life in exile in France and Switzerland, his French was fluent, but speaking it had a curious effect on him. He seemed to regard the foreign language as a kind of musical exercise. Speaking, or, more exactly, singing it, he was one of those musicians who go in extensively for "repeats." In common also with singers, his face preserved a detached expressionlessness, whilst from his mouth proceeded extremely meaningful sounds. The effect resembled those cartoons in which, from an impassive face, words written in a drawn balloon, sing out of a sketch.

His speech then was more like a great aria than a discourse, or oratory. The more so since, after a few politenesses, ghosts began to appear and fill the room. Sereno began: "Our Soviet colleagues have come here—have come here, I say—with the evident purpose—the evident purpose—of carrying on a co-operative discussion. The more welcome to me, personally—the more welcome to me—since I have the same intention—the same intention. . . ." There was another pause like a musical notation before he went on . . . "Since de-Stalinisation, I have thought a great deal about my friends—my colleagues—my friends whom I knew in Russia twenty-five years ago. During the past days, I have been reading the works of those—those who from out of their prisons—in various countries—Fascist or Communist—or from their places of exile—their islands and ends of the earth—have written the facts which must now surely be made available the world over, all over the world."

Names now began to strike out of his large, impassive, pear-shaped head, like sounds from a great bronze bell—Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxembourg, Leon Trotsky. They sat there in cells with but the smallest narrow window slitted on the world. Between abstractions they poured on to thin paper pamphlets defending their actions, they wrote poems to swallows that wheeled at dusk around the prison yard. They tapped out messages from wall to wall. They went into exile in a land of cactuses.

"In my heart . . . in my heart . . . I have never broken or quarrelled with my Russian colleagues. Friendship has been interrupted . . . cut off . . . but only with hammers and axes, and these don't really count. . . . I have remained faithful to their warmth in personal relations and their principles, their principles, to them I have remained faithful."

Another pause, then he pursued: "And these principles, I am glad to say, are now honoured again, once more honoured. I would like confirmation of this point from the colleagues now sitting here, that those principles and those faces, are now once more honoured. Unfortunately this honouring cannot give them back their lives, bring them back from the dead. Unfortunately.

"With deep emotion, I listened to the very true words that M. Pobedin spoke about Russian literature. Gogol, whom he had not mentioned, Gogol, who wrote *Dead Souls*, did not Gogol, Tolstoy, Chekhov, have a unique place in the minds of readers all over the world, a unique position which outbalanced

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the fame of every other novelist, living or dead? Why? Above all, because they voiced the suffering of the oppressed, they wrote the words that were in the mouths of the perhaps silenced victims of tyranny, had even charity for those rejected not only by tyrants, but by liberals as well. They had charity for criminals, murderers, outlaws. Alas, much as one would like to do so, one could not agree altogether, be quite in accordance with the view, that the great Russian tradition is unbroken. Perhaps it is in abeyance, I hope it is only in abeyance, but what recent novelists, what novelists of the twenty-five last years, have given words to the victims of Stalin, the unjustly condemned, the executed, those sent to the slave camps, the deported, the tortured and silenced? Traditionally, Russian literature is not just popular, in the sense of being of the people, folkish, it is also non-conformist, it has always been political not in the sense of taking orders from above, but in that of being on the side of the people against their politicians—politically anti-political, one might say. The tradition was broken when writers began to support the State against society. . . ."

But now, just when he seemed in his stride, he hesitated. The meeting had got to a stage when time no longer counted. Every speech seemed too long or too short. There was no sense of proportion. Those who spoke at any length became lost in the stream of their own words, whilst those listening did not take in words at all, which had become an element, the weather. Somehow they grasped what was being said from the ability of the speaker to press on in a particular direction through the confusion, inertia, resistance, that had accumulated in the air of the room, like static electricity. Perhaps Sereno lost direction and impetus, allowed his ideas to become dissolved in the waters of so many other things already said, as an inevitable "historic" result of the period of decay into which the meeting, like an isolated segment of history, had fallen.

The speech had come to the place when Sereno ought to clinch the argument, or at least launch out on a massive peroration. But instead of this it was beginning to change into other things—dissolve into the smoke of Sarret's endless Gaulois' cigarettes, disintegrate among stubs of pencils, be fanned away among whispers and by the murmurs of the intellectuals, their gusts of laughter. It still had the power to crystallise into an image . . . "I also have fought against tyranny . . . I also know the meaning of cunning, anonymity, exile, and prison. . . ." and a picture emerged of Sereno as a young man in the hills of his village up in the North, Sereno chalking slogans upon walls, Sereno mourning a cousin murdered on a penal island because he bore the same name: a cartoon went wandering up to The Reconciliation on the wall, the brawny young Sereno with his passion for freedom, set among the warriors, the princes, the gods.

The enormous sprawling speech took over Sereno's whole life, matched against these other lives. There was beauty in Sereno sitting at the table watching his youth which had so much courage and dignity, yet the very moment when, like his speech, his life should concentrate all its past into a ball that burst through the confusion of the present into a clear future, he remained content to invoke the lithe tigers of youthful memory and set them running among the conference of intellectuals.

Now, making a show of recovery, he was challenging Sarret. "I cannot enter, I find no way to enter into the point of view of M. Sarret, which divides the world into two irreconcilable camps. There is only one humanity, in my view . . . only one humanity . . . and the meeting place of this humanity is the confidence that we are all at some point ultimately the same, in being human. Without faith that human beings are fundamentally the same everywhere, there is no point of meeting . . . because if we were not the same in being human, then we would belong to different species."

Csongor Botov held his pencil pressed against his teeth, his mouth rather unpleasantly wide. With a malicious smile, his quicksilver glance turned from Sereno back to the Russians.

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Then a window suddenly blew open. From the courtyard below rose a great drumming, trumpeting, and shouting. The draught lifted papers from the table, drowned the murmur of voices, dissolved tobacco smoke. Pomyalov, grinning, lurched up from the table, and walked across to the window, out of which he waved convivially to the crowd of wedding guests visiting Venice, assembled below.

By the time the window was shut and Pomyalov, bonhomous, had returned to his seat, Sereno's speech had faded away like smoke on the horizon of their desert ocean. And now, since positions had been taken up by nearly everyone present, nothing could prevent Sereno being attacked according to the routine of dialectic. The fact that they knew the answers he would make, made it all the more necessary for Sarret to give them. Flattened, deflated, profoundly discouraged, Sarret was like one who has had his vision of life removed under an anæsthetic. In a mechanical, business-like voice he answered Sereno: "It is not to exchange platitudes about our common humanity that we meet here, but to discuss points of difference; and it is in order that we should examine seriously the possibility of overcoming these differences, that it is necessary to understand how basically opposed our attitudes are. Otherwise we should only arrive at superficial agreements, based on sentimental misinterpretations of a humanity which we share."

Alexander Pobedin gravely, solemnly, thanked Sereno for what was clearly an important speech. Pobedin said he could not reply to the many important things Sereno had said, until he had had time to study the speech more closely. He could suggest now, though, that it was not altogether just to say that Soviet writers had failed to express the sufferings of humanity. If M. Sereno would study the books of Russian Communist writers at the time of the Civil War, he would find they bore witness to a great deal of suffering. It was an interesting abstract question which might be debated sometime—Pobedin went on with a courteous smile—how far it was the duty of the writer to express suffering.

Curlew, raising his massive head with its great load of hair, spoke next.

In the development of the Conference, one of the most marked changes was in Curlew's attitude. At first almost apologetic, he had become more dogmatic and assertive with every session. His interventions were of the kind which is called "masterful." Usually he read out some brisk points which he had tabulated under headings one, two, and three, sub-headings, alpha, beta, gamma, and delta. He no longer disguised under the modest cloak of nuclear physics that he had definite views about literature. Liberated, perhaps, in his small sectarian way by the Thaw, he even went so far as to tell Pobedin that James Joyce was not a decadent obscuranticist, but a popular, even over-simple writer. The smile with which he said this expressed his *tendresse* for the Dubliner trained by Jesuits.

He spoke in the relaxed tone of a universal mind willing to deliver a lecture to the completely ignorant on almost anything: "One of the best characteristics of English civilisation," he began, "is—or so it has

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always seemed to me—the concept of *'le fair play.'* Another strongly held English idea—the converse of *'le fair play'*—is the idea of what the English hold to be *'oonfair.'* It seems to me that Sereno is being *'oonfair'* in introducing politics into the discussion. But since politics have been introduced, one may perhaps point out that if the Russian team contained members of the calibre of Sereno and Sarret, they would be able to reply to the charges that had been made. One of the things the great Sobolov would say if he had come to Venice was that it was *'oonfair'* to attack Stalinism without mentioning Hitlerism. A Russian of Sobolov's calibre would also probably have something to say about colonialism."

"Certainly they may talk about colonialism. I shall be glad to hear, and probably I shall agree with them," said Sereno. "As for Hitlerism, I did not anticipate that I would be invited to mention every crime going on outside Russia as an excuse for Stalinism. In any case, many of the things I had in mind, happened before Hitler came to power."

BOTOV, leaning forward, with elbows pushed against his side, and his clenched fists lying on the table in front of him, now started speaking—shouting almost—in his loud, harsh voice. "I am profoundly shocked and disappointed by what we have just heard M. Sereno say. What I most deplore is the lack of charity in some of these remarks. Why does M. Sereno not try to understand the suffering, the real suffering, of the writers of that time? Then perhaps he will not judge them so harshly for hiatuses in their work. Then, too, in the spirit of charity he will try to forget the past—and welcome what is happening now." And Botov went on rapidly to speak of himself, repeating things he had said already. He had had difficulties for a long time, his books were banned, but now they were being published again, and they were sold in thousands, and were beloved by the ordinary people, as well as being admired by the intelligentsia, and they were being translated into several People's languages, and he was President of the Academy, and where there were or had been injustices, he wished to see these undone. What Botov said, his harsh insistence, his jagged accent, reminded of a gramophone needle stuck in a groove. Sereno observed, in a dry tone, that he hoped his charity did extend to writers, but it also extended beyond them—to the victims they had not written about.

THERE WAS more talk, of course, endless talk, in which Sarret threw Proust into the discussion. Pobedin declared that Proust was for the most part decadent, though sometimes socially significant. Marteau retorted: "If they consider Proust decadent then let us not discuss Proust, but let us by all means discuss decadence." Bonvolio said they could all agree to discuss why they agreed to discuss Proust's decadence. After this, they decided to spend the rest of the week being strictly practical: and only to discuss what they might discuss at a future discussion. But really, Olim reflected, they had been discussing this all the time.

VI

SO THEIR table, adrift with papers, notebooks, pencils, words, words, words, poured ideologies out over everything they saw, like that white rain-cloud which, on the evening of Olim's arrival, had made the corners of palaces at the ends of canals seem black and white photographs projected upon a screen. Everything was transformed into cerebral terms within ideologic concepts of analysable history. Not marble, nor the gilded monuments could resist being melted down into materialist motives underlying ethereal imaginings. A thick net dragged statues down to dialectical history. And standing above it, there were the grinning, squabbling faces of the modern intellectuals, imprisoned by their own awareness which put them at the centre of past and future historic struggles. The squat, pink-faced analysts asserted their superiority over the superb inventors, by a few tricks of intelligent exposition, which, explaining everything, made somnambulent, creative dreaming impossible, and locked them themselves inside their dull

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world of chemists, detectives, and policemen. Since all the past was imprisoned within the contemporary cerebral interpretation, there was an ironic sense in which Pobedin's saying that Shakespeare, Dante, and Gœthe were contemporaries, was true.

SATURDAY BEING, even for them, a half-holiday, that afternoon they were taken a tour of the islands—Torcello, Murano, and Burano. They lunched at Torcello, all of them seated at one long trestle table, in the little restaurant behind the cathedral.

Olim found himself, as on the first evening, sitting near Magda Karinthy and Dunstan Curlew. Their situation repeated the former occasion, and as had happened previously Curlew had the air of being tuned in exclusively to Magda. Olim decided, on reflection, that no offence was meant; it was simply that one aspect of being a scientist was Curlew's undiffused concentration on whatever happened to demand his attention. Nor was he surprised that Magda ignored him. The essential thing about their meeting on the gondola was that they had both counted at the time on its not counting. They recognised that something which had happened had not happened. And if they now had any feeling for one another it was trust in the power of each to regard their intercourse as null and void.

The great scientist was in frolicsome mood. The oscillations of his enormous head had increased in frequency, whilst his eyes gleamed through multiple horizontal furrows. He nodded backwards and forward like some great benign pasteboard carnival figure at a fête. With many chuckles, he regaled his neighbours with tales of the great scientific eccentrics. There was Gander, the biologist, demonstrator in anatomy, who, having to undergo an operation on a most intimate part of his body, had a local anæsthetic, and gave a lecture on the sectioning to his assembled female students while the operation was in progress. Plover, the pisciculturalist, owing to his ingenuous credulity, discovered an entirely new species of fish. A nervous student, not daring to admit his ignorance of a fish he was asked to describe in a *viva voce* examination, had improvised. Plover, who always believed what he was told, went away puzzled, and pursued immense researches until finally he discovered a hitherto unknown species corresponding to the student's account.

In the excitement of his discourse, Dunstan Curlew spilled a drop of wine on the tablecloth. Obedient to science, it docilely spread itself into ragged, roughly concentric rings of different density and colouration. Flattered, by its behaving so "typically," Curlew pointed to the stain, and said: "You see, the wine is giving us a demonstration by splitting up into its component substances, some darker, some lighter, some denser, some thinner. Wine went on patiently doing this for centuries without anyone appreciating its humble exercise in self-analysis. Then someone noticed that the spilt liquid behaved in this helpful way on a cloth or blotting paper, and, ever since, this has been the recognised way of analysing its components." Bellowing amiably, he wagged his great golden Jason fleece. He seemed a wolf in ram's clothing.

He was so pleased with the demonstration that even Olim got drawn in as an admiring spectator. Perhaps with a subterranean wish to embarrass or please Magda (he did not know which), he asked once more, "What did you think of Krushchev's speech?" Curlew blinked, retracted his head a few dazed inches, and then conceded: "Well, it does seem that a good many things happened which one would not have believed possible." "Do you think that anything could have gone wrong *over there*, during the past twenty years?" "Well, it does appear that mistakes were made which one would not have calculated on. One does not see how they could have happened."

NOW THAT Olim had received his large, juicy bone, there was nothing to do, except go off and bury it somewhere. He actually did get up from the table, wander out into the vineyard just beyond the cluster

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of buildings which made up the piazza that is all Torcello—with a sense of hugging himself. He understood what Sereno's expressionlessness concealed—that the greatest tragedy is the greatest farce, that a roar from the throats of ten thousand slaughtered bulls may also be a laugh across the dark plains of the world. Were there not the clouds of witnesses of two thousand years of Christendom, were there not all the poets agreed for once with all the saints, were there not all the historians and psychologists, who ought to be here just to listen to Curlew sublimely utter—*"mistakes that one could not have calculated on seem to have been made."* The folly was so precious that he did not want to answer it. He wanted it kept for eternity in its pure intrinsic absurdity, he wanted to stage a Last Judgement and have all the dead of all the ages gather round to hear Dunstan Curlew, turnkey of history, say again and again: *"One does not see how these mistakes could have happened."* One has no eyes, one has no ears, one only has a brain.

He turned back. By now the intellectuals had finished their meal, and were trailing along the single path by the single canal which leads from Torcello's Piazza to its tiny harbour. Pursuing his rôle of inquirer, spectator, *advocatus diaboli*, Olim caught up with Sarret, who was standing alone just beyond that little bridge which, from the side nearest the harbour encloses in the loop of its hollow stone-built Omega a view of the whole tower of the *campanile*. He entered into a Socratic dialogue with Sarret which he seemed already to have planned in his own mind.

Olim

M. Sarret, there is a question I would like to put to you.

Sarret

I would be very glad to answer.

Olim

You think that there are two completely opposed attitudes in the world today: the bourgeois, which represents the interest of capitalism; and the Communist, which represents that of the proletariat?

Sarret

Yes, with a few qualifying circumstances, that is what I do think.

Olim

You believe that if one has bourgeois attitudes, one supports capitalism?

Sarret

That is so.

Olim

And that in so far as anyone succeeds in identifying himself with the Communist attitude, he is on the side of the proletariat?

Sarret

With certain reservations, that is, broadly speaking, what I believe.

Olim

At any rate, you believe that if, even for what may seem good reasons, someone gets into a position which is anti-Communist, then he is setting himself against the workers?

Sarret

Yes.

Olim

Well: I would like you to consider the following hypothetical situation. You, M. Sarret, have been sentenced to a long term of imprisonment in a Communist state for a political crime of which you know yourself to be, in fact, and in thought, completely innocent. You are sitting in a cell alone in a prison of, let us suppose, Budapest. From there, you learn through the rapping on the wall of other prisoners who are also in solitary confinement, but who are in communication with the outside world, that a bourgeois journalist, an official hack, called Olim Asphalt, has written an article saying that you are completely innocent of the crimes of which you have been accused, and setting out authoritatively both the truth of your opinions, and of the unjust trial by which you have been condemned. Would you be pleased or displeased at this news? Would you welcome the idea that somewhere there was a witness for the truth against those who had wrongfully imprisoned you?

Sarret

(*turning round on his heel, which he had pressed rather deep into the soil*)

You may be surprised to hear that

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is a question I have often put to myself. It is an interesting question, and not easy to answer. But I have tried to answer it to myself in this way: of course, I do not know what my reaction in such circumstances would be, but that does not matter. I know now, not being in prison, and therefore being at this present moment impartial, what I would wish it to be. I hope that I would consider that if your article helped the cause of those who were opposed to my unjust gaolers —of whom I was convinced that nevertheless they represented the proletariat—then you should not have published it.

STANDING at the edge of the canal a few yards from them, his arms folded Napoleon-wise across his chest, and on his wooden features a wide, sardonic grin, was Botov. He seemed to be enjoying the view of the vineyards. He seemed to take in everything on the island. Sarret nodded to Olim as though to say, "I have answered your question with the utmost precision. For the time being, you can hardly expect more of me," and walked away to rejoin Marteau.

Botov's presence, disturbing though it was, yet made Olim suddenly aware of the shining, peaceful island. For all he had noticed of it till now, it might have been a disk revolved by all their talk and restless energy, on which they were standing—the single still centre, the hub of the slender, transparent-looking campanile. Now it seemed as quiet as an engraving of campanile, cathedral, piazza, basilica, vineyards, a few scattered monuments: drawn above the soil flat as the single line of a horizon, one of each of everything, like symbols on a postage stamp.

"Shall we go for a stroll?" Olim asked Csongor Botov. "There's not very far we can walk on a postage stamp." Nevertheless, by crossing the bridge, they got to the vineyards on the other side of the canal, and found themselves separated from the rest of the party by a hedge of vines. The vine leaves were beginning to shoot like transparent flint spearheads, thin, green as agate, very pure and pale, out of the black stems. A man, his shirt stripped off, was tending them. Botov was still grinning. The light caught his aureole of standing-up white hair. "Do you remember?" Olim asked. Suddenly, the thought crossed his mind that perhaps Botov had never really recognized him. He might easily have thought he was some other visitor from England. "Oh, yes. I do remember. I would like you to know that." "How long ago was it—the wine-tasting in the vineyards, when we drove out from the castle—you remember?" "A century ago. Two centuries ago." He laughed, a little foolishly. "But, after all, already then, before the coup, you had a Communist government?" "That was the year of the changes —since then there have been a lot more changes." He said "changes" in the first half of this sentence as though it committed him. In the second half, it defined the gulf between him and Olim. Botov turned back towards the bridge.

HAD THEY not returned just at this moment, Bonvolio—signalling furiously, like some wooden puppet, communicating entirely in spasms and semaphore—would certainly have indicated to them to come at once and get on board. Their two motor-boats were waiting to take them to

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Murano where, half an hour later, they saw the glass-making. In a burning, glowing workshop, men, naked to the waist, thrust tubes into a brazier of molten glass, raised them to their lips with the gesture of followers of Pan trumpeting through goat-horns, and blew marvellous glass bubbles. These they twisted, rotating in the air, altering their shapes from circle to oblong or oval. Then with hammers, tongs, pincers, they worked these forms on anvils, adding a knob or a handle, nipping off an end or a bulge. The muscles of the forearm of a youth twisting a balloon of glass seemed a ripple that communicated its turns into spirals of the glass. When an error was detected in an object finished or half-complete, the workman would throw it on the ground with the extravagance of a perruqued aristocrat on the stage, hurling his wine-glass at the wall, after he had drunk a toast.

Here were foreman and workers, like Bacchus and his pards. But the glass-making was a show-window of Venice, and perhaps these workmen were not the real proletariat, perhaps they were largely putting on their act of craftsmanship, and resembled ballet dances rather than "real" workers. (The intellectuals always had doubts of this kind when confronted by workers. Perhaps, in some way, they were not "real.")

They were taken to see the finished products of the workmen, in a large gallery which was a showroom. There they were: covering the floor, heaped on tables and on shelves, reaching up to the ceiling, objects of such hideousness—thick, twisted, convolvuluslike, lumpy, bubbled, and coloured, Venetian glass, with its barley sugar and acid-drop textures.

Amidst this endless array of shapes of twisted toffee, under candelabra of pink and blue roses and dropping beads, surrounded by a small army of pierrots, harlequins, and columbines, one show-case of plain glass stood there like a reproach. It was the factory museum, and contained specimens of work going back two hundred years: a few wine-glasses on very long stems, a plate engraved with signs of the Zodiac, bowls like calyxes, some bottles, jars, vases, and carafes, of transparent, slender, petal-thin transparency.

Alex Merton and Olim had got together, like a chorus, in the display gallery. Their sneers, which had begun already at school and at Oxford, were sufficiently private to go unnoticed by the Russians, deeply impressed by the results of the glass industry (though Pobedin said he regretted so much beauty being lavished on capitalist purchasers).

"This does make one believe, all the same, that the bourgeoisie is decayed," said Olim. "Not just the bourgeoisie," said Alex, "this is what the proletariat adore." And he pointed to a wall on which hung the most hideous object in the factory. It was a glass crêche, made the previous Christmas by the workers for their own delectation. "Besides," he added, pointing to the Russians, "this is their first glimpse since they've been abroad of social realism. For the first time they find something contemporary to admire. And hasn't Sarret been telling us that they are the voice of the Master proletariat?"

They were on the pavement at the grey canal edge at the factory quayside where the motor launch was waiting. It was suddenly quite hot. The others were still wandering among glass monstrosities. Alex leaned against the wall, his elbow pressing it, and his hand touching the back of his head. Olim looked at him, taking him in and not taking him for granted, seeing him for—it seemed—the first time in years. With his soft, smooth hair in which the comb seemed to have left lines like an engraving, his grey eyes, his features of a family mould, rather strong, but which left some mystery about himself within this handsome casing—he was Englishly distinguished. Whatever their faults, Olim and Alex had never surrendered a single joke shared between them.

"You see," Olim said—"I was right about Sarret. Do you know what he said to me just now?" and he recounted the conversation which had taken place between them. "And he said he hoped *I would not publish the truth if doing so would discredit unjust gaolers*. Didn't I tell you his philosophy was a stick he used to beat his true perceptions

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with? There it all is, in a nut-shell! The truth observed, the particular experience, has to be submitted to the doctrinal propaganda of the side supposed to be inevitably, unalterably, eternally right, automatically benefiting humanity!"

"Well, ever since this Conference started, I haven't seen one stone that doesn't seem impregnated with ideology!"

"And then there's Dunstan Curlew who, when I asked him what he thought of the Krushchev report, said: *'Mistakes that no one could have anticipated seem to have occurred!'* Why doesn't he agree that such mistakes are the inevitable result of Sarret's principle that the truth should not be published if it discredits the government which appoints the gaolers?"

"You could hardly expect him to see that," said Alex, a bit impatiently.

"And there isn't such a difference between the two sides in their attitude to truth, as Sarret seems to think. The gulf joins underneath."

"I must say, I hadn't noticed much sign of their agreeing."

"They both agree that the particular detailed observation if it doesn't happen to subserve the 'truth' of the general stated aim, has to be set aside, in case it might blow up some organisation. LITUNO, organising culture, is a doctrinal body. Both sides agree, moreover, on the aim which is common to all modern industrialised societies."

"What is that?"

"Production! Things! More and more things! A whirlwind, a water-spout of consumer goods, standing on the earth and covering it with a cloud which pours down television sets, refrigerators, automobiles, vacuum cleaners. Pouring down the new, the eminently consumable, it also sucks up the old, melts it down, transforms it into ersatz materials. The earth covered with Dunstan Curlew's machines for living in which are made economically out of the sucked-up marble of Venetian rubble!"

Alex rubbed his cheek with the side of one hand. "Well, we all in fact do agree that we have to provide or destroy on a total scale. The cloud *could* be impregnated with nothing but atomic radiation. And if one has to choose between total production and total destruction, I suppose one prefers the former. Unless one turns back to religion," he added thoughtfully.

"No religion could make any difference at all! The religions which preach dispossessedness are just waiting to be swept away by the mobs, as Orthodoxy was in Russia. Even the Pope pays lip-service to the true modern religion of things, things, everything, or nothing, nothing, the end."

"I am sure you are waiting eagerly to tell me the answer!"

Olim looked across the canal to the buildings here where palaces seemed in the process of becoming metamorphised into factories.

"Venice might be the answer."

"I thought Venice was doomed to be boiled down in gigantic retorts by Dunstan Curlew."

"We can't stop the torrent of things, but we might deflect it. We don't want super-men, but we could want super-objects. In the past, civilisation has begun when someone has transformed the serviceable object into the object which is an end in itself. The killer, the hunter, begins to be redeemed when the craftsman makes the knife with the carved bone handle."

"You can't expect democracy to be anything except entirely utilitarian."

"Yet when people get nothing but the useful they are so bored, they think life no longer worth living. Utilitarian democracy is democracy no one wants."

"I don't believe the people will ever construct a Venice."

"Today we're at the caveman stage of socialism. When the people wish to serve not just their own needs, but the idea of a super-object—something outside their immediate satisfactions, and beyond the reach of their lives—then we shall have begun to escape from the police state. The knives of the assassins will have carved bone handles."

Just then, Botov, followed, at a distance, by the other intellectuals, came out of the glass factory.

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"Have you noticed something about Botov?" asked Alex.

"What?"

"Under his clothes he wears stays. He uses scent."

Olim laughed: "That makes him the person here who is nearest to what's real. He's an old-fashioned æsthete. He cares only for the beautiful. He's a type in process of being destroyed. And what hurts him most is that he is the only one of them who's alive: which means he has to be re-born."

Botov looked round sharply and suspiciously, aware that he was being talked about. Seeing Olim, he gave him a hard stare and an icy, ironic bow, an intended insult.

"And Magda Karinthy?" asked Alex, hurriedly, before the others could overhear them.

"We went out in a gondola."

"How are you getting on? Are you seeing her again? Will you be able to make her?"

"We haven't spoken since."

"Why not?"

"The Party has its reasons that do not know the heart."

THE OTHERS joined them and they poured into the two large speed-boats which raced to the landing nearest the piazza.

Back at Venice, one more treat awaited: a special showing of an Italian anti-Fascist film. The action took place in Florence—a Florence no tourist had ever seen or heard of, without the Arno, without the Medici chapel, without Michelangelo's David—just tall, barrack-like tenements, along wide streets, in a bare landscape like a deserted strip of beach. Everywhere was concrete and sand. Everything happened either in these streets, or in bedrooms, one of them that of a nice young man who had a nicer, at first ugly, but later—the camera saw—pretty, fiancée. The Fascists gained control, and the unpleasant youth who was a Fascist leader tried to get all the people in the tenement to become Fascists. The nice young man, who had not thought about politics till then, realised through their faces and their uniforms and their actions that the Fascists were bad, so he refused to join them. Meeting some very good Communists, he became an anti-Fascist. After this, his life was battles in which he was always on the right side. He did much anti-Fascist activity on his bicycle.

This film all took place in these grey rooms and grey streets, with workers, and uniforms, and speeches, and violence. The whole mythology was so familiar, in a language difficult to follow, that after a time Olim wearied, and started looking at his neighbour, Dunstan Curlew. Curlew was watching intently, leaning forward in his seat frowning at the screen, and breathing heavily. Whenever the anti-Fascist hero was bullied or beaten, he heaved a sigh. At moments, he was so overcome that he had to look away from the screen, holding his head in his hands. The Fascists threw the anti-Fascist youth's bicycle into a bonfire which they had lit by burning books of good literature. At this, the anguish of Olim's neighbour seemed intolerable. He covered his face with his hands and sobbed without restraint.

As they came out of the cinema, Olim, shadow-dark, with his mop of black hair and his silhouetted leanness, rushed over to Alex Merton and asked: "Did you see Curlew?"

Alex smiled at him—a bit forbearingly—and said: "No. I was glued. My eyes were glued to that imbecile film."

"When he saw the anti-fascist's bicycle thrown on the bonfire, he groaned, he howled, he buried his face in his hands, he could not bear to look at the screen."

"I don't believe you! You're inventing the whole thing! You make up everything! You are malicious!" He laughed.

"How is it that a person who reproaches Sereno for mentioning ten thousand victims can be so moved by fictitious suffering?"

"He cares for what he sees enacted in front of his eyes. What he hears spoken about, remains an abstraction."

"But he accepts the crimes of Stalin in the name of an abstraction—progress, the hypothetical happiness of people who are unborn."

"All the same, the real acted-out incident causes him to suffer profoundly. It might be just that which is so dangerous. The dictator

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doesn't lose his power to weep over a worker's dead child, and as long as he retains this power, everything he does seems justified to him. Hitler wouldn't, personally, put a Jewish child in an incinerator. Anyway, after all, who cares for what happens to thousands of people one has never seen? Who cares? Do you care? Does anyone?"

Olim was shaken. "No, I don't. But I realise I don't care, and this makes me distrust all causes and myself."

"And it justifies you in judging Dunstan Curlew? It justifies you in your malice?" Olim hesitated. Then he said: "That's exactly what it does. It would make me—if I were anything in my old age—a fiendish satirist."

VII

THEY HAD a session that evening to decide on that culminating piece of meaninglessness—which all participants at conferences know to be meaningless, but to which nevertheless they attach the utmost importance—the communiqué. No one would act as a result of having read this, in fact, it is doubtful whether anyone ever would read it, and even if he did, it could not possibly communicate any message that would affect him in the least. Yet just because it was a verbal formula and those responsible for phrasing it were intellectuals—most of them—engaged in writing, their professional honour seemed at stake. There was a feeling that although the communiqué must inevitably convey nothing, this nothing should combine the inspiration of a prose ballad by Sereno with the exactness of an experiment written up by Dunstan Curlew. It was regarded as a literary exercise in an accepted form, and each member of the Conference, even while sneering at the very idea of it, nevertheless considered that this very pure example of hermetic art should be an improvement on the content, form, and style of all other communiqués.

Bonvolio was the only one there who wanted the communiqué to communicate anything. And for him, it had a supremely important meaning: it was to be the manifesto of Bonvolismus.

The communiqué was the expression of what Bonvolio had resolved to accomplish through the meeting of intellectuals drawn from the two sides of the opposing world-factions. That meeting existed, was palpable, was here, in this room in the Doges' Palace. And that is precisely what the communiqué had to say.

But first of all the intellectuals had to be made to see, and to admit in public, that when they met under Bonvolio's ægis, they shed all their national and party political loyalties, and had become international intellectuals, members of EUROPLUME, re-born within the Thought of Bonvolio. They had to be made to see what was so obvious to him—that they represented nothing except their will to meet. Beyond the Bonvolio doctrine there lay, of course, in the future, a kind of Transcendent Marxism, a politics based on the fact that through meeting, and through accepting the doctrine, the intellectuals had acquired a material interest in bridging gulfs.

EUROPLUME eventually would become a kind of Class Interest of the Mind within the Class Struggle. It was, in fact, the Synthesis of all other struggles, on the plane of the Intelligence.

As far as he himself was concerned, Bonvolio could say that, from the bottom of his heart, he represented no one but himself; he who was EUROPLUME, the synthetic man, the new unity of East and West. He was the Bridge incarnate. All the diverse interests of the different individuals meeting here, were fused in him. He was the first world-political, international, intellectual man, a kind of missing link between nationalists and the world patriots of UNO and LITUNO.

Knowing as he did that this meeting had spent a week discussing nothing, and that it had no programme beyond the proposal to call another meeting, he calculated that the contents of the communiqué would be a vacuum to be filled by their chairman.

Bonvolio still clung to the idea that criticism could be overcome by arming his propositions at defensive points with words such as "precisely," "concretely," and "exactly."

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As a second line of defence, he decided that it would be strategically wise to accompany his manifesto with appeals for help in drafting it to those better equipped with gifts of clear exposition. Bonvolio regarded logic as something that could be added to new-born, naked confusion, like a fig-leaf or a napkin.

He was extremely nervous. All day, during the excursion, he had tended to walk apart from the others. At luncheon, at Torcello, he had eaten in silence, brandishing his knife and fork over his food, as though they were weapons guarding him from interruption, while he concentrated on his Thought. From time to time he had crushed his handkerchief against the high, bare dome of his head, as though to stop steam escaping from it, with a corresponding loss of energy.

When they left the cinema after the anti-Fascist film, he announced rather tersely that in half-an-hour's time they would continue their meetings at the Doges' Palace. There were a few protests, but since there were no women to be considered—apart from Magda, who was only an interpreter—these were not taken seriously. He brushed them aside.

As soon as they were seated, Bonvolio plunged into his discourse. He was very agitated, and it was understandable that his opening words produced an effect of utter confusion. Phrases such as *"society is the same as culture but culture is not the same as society,"* and *"we in this room pass out of society and through culture into politics, and hence back to society again at a social-cultural level"* puzzled Borès, who was trying hard to make notes.

Then, Bonvolio referred to the communiqué, the object of this session: "In my view, which is always subject to correction, the communiqué that we shall give to the press is of world-historical importance in the future of intellectual life."

Until he said *"communiqué,"* the attention he had been attracting was about as much as that given by an audience to a tuning-up orchestra. Occasionally some instrument runs through a difficult passage of the work about to be performed, and then perhaps one or two of the audience will perfunctorily listen.

At mention of *communiqué*, there was a stiffening of backs and an alerting of pens and pencils.

"I have outlined here my own sketch—which I submit to you, subject to all sorts of corrections—my own sketch of the communiqué." He produced a sheet of paper. "I implore you to give this your most precise attention. This is, if I may say so, the fruit of ten years labour, the heart of my philosophy. It would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that, on and off, I have devoted those ten years to formulating these few lines. They may not have that exactitude and precision that some of you here can infuse into a thesis, though I do think that they are expressed with the utmost concreteness of which I am capable. What, precisely, I feel is that we ought, at this meeting, to affirm the fundamental bases and principles of our society, incarnated (if I may say so, at this time of Easter, without blasphemy) in the physical presence of those who are here, coming from such opposed places of origin."

This, and a good deal more than this, left him a bit breathless and there was time for Dunstan Curlew to suggest with practical weight, that perhaps the chairman might now read the proposed communiqué. Borès interrupted to raise a technical objection to its being read without having been "issued." Bonvolio, far too excited to hear this, proceeded to read what he had written. *Viz.*:

> *"We intellectuals from countries in Eastern and Western Europe having met here together for this week in Venice, are in agreement that our meeting manifests our sense that in meeting, we represent, not the opposed factions of politics, but the unity of culture which transcends political divisions.*
>
> *"Accordingly, we are decided to call a larger meeting of intellectuals coming from different parts of Europe, East and West, to discuss matters in which they may*

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appear to disagree, within the wider agreement that they represent not the opposing forces of politics, but the cultural unity signified by the very fact of their meeting.

"We wish to record our conviction that as the result of this meeting and the one that is to follow, a new force has come into intellectual life, a force traversing all national political frontiers. This is EUROPLUME. The defence of this force, in which we participate, we call THE POLITICS OF CULTURE."

There was absolute silence for a few moments. Bonvolio was unnerved. He said: "Although this is the core of my thought, I do not regard it, considered as exposition, as complete. There are precisions and, let me say, concretisations, which require to be added. I do not claim for it that logic in which M. Sarret excels. But then, why should I? This is a co-operative organisation, and our results come from all of us giving what we have to offer. Give me now your logic to add to what I dare call my inspiration. All I implore is that you remain true to the spirit of what I have just read, because this is simply a summary of the aims and ideals of EUROPLUME which have brought us here. Unless you agree with me and with this you would not have agreed to meet. That is the concrete materialist basis from which the ideology of my philosophy springs."

There was a slightly longer silence. Then Borès, who had chewed well the end of his pencil, said: "I fail to see how we can comply with a statement which seems to commit us to so much without having a text before us which we can examine line by line, word by word, letter by letter."

Everyone agreed that a communiqué required a written text which might be examined *line by line, word by word, letter by letter.*

Accordingly, secretaries were sent forth to type out in multiplicate Bonvolio's heart laid bare. Meanwhile, the Conference, suddenly business-like, discussed who should attend the next meeting. Dunstan Curlew had a list of young scientists, all from Cambridge or London, who, he thought, should be invited. ("*Culture,*" he said, "*is not just literature.*")

When the text was in front of them they tore into it like a pack of hounds. Marteau was first. Leaning forward with his hands clasped in front of him on the table, he said in sentences occasionally broken off by fits of laughter: "I really have to protest that there is an assumption in this document which I fail to understand." He looked at Sarret, and had to put his hand over his mouth before he could proceed. "What I fail to see is any connection between the fact that we have real differences and that we have agreed to come into this room to discuss them. When we arrived here a few days ago, we did not leave our opinions in the cloakroom with our overcoats, and agree to belong to nothing except EUROPLUME which in some way overrides the differences we had before we came here. When we go back tomorrow to Moscow, or London, or Paris, or Budapest, we are, in the most important respects, the same people as those who came here a week ago, from those places. It is nice that we have met, but we ought not to nurse too many illusions. . . ." his words trailed off, drowned in his laughing.

Sereno's contribution was an enormous, helpless, amused shrug, and an indicating movement of his eyes, first to Marteau, then to Bonvolio.

"Surely," said Alex Merton, "There does not have to be a communiqué? A simple test: can any one of us here remember a single communiqué from a single meeting of intellectuals? We are just wasting our time. Let us by all means issue an announcement that we have met, discussed things, agreed to meet again. That is all that is necessary. That says everything essential."

"Order! Order!" screamed Bonvolio, infuriated. "You are speaking on a matter that has nothing to do with the agenda!"

"I was speaking about the communiqué. Surely that is what we are discussing," said Alex amiably.

"We were not discussing *having no communiqué.* We were not discussing making an announcement. You speak out of turn, before the chairman has called upon you. You ruin

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everything! You are opposing the spirit of EUROPLUME on which we are all agreed!" cried Bonvolio. He looked as if he were about to have a fit.

"I apologise," said Alex Merton.

Then the Russians rallied to Bonvolio. Pobedin said, slowly and solemnly, that he thought the communiqué expressed a beautiful idea, and although the formulation might be slightly altered, this idea should be retained. Pomyalov said toughly that as long as they agreed about culture there was no need to quarrel about anything. No one could disagree about culture. The important thing was not to bring in politics.

After that, the communiqué was like a bull in the arena. It had to be killed according to the rules. Borès proposed that a sub-committee be set up to re-draft the communiqué, taking into account the wishes that had been expressed by the meeting. Curlew, who saluted in Borès the screws of efficiency, seconded the proposal, and suggested that Borès should be the chairman of the sub-committee. Borès returned the compliment by proposing a programme-planning sub-committee with Curlew as chairman. Sereno, benevolent, said that the communiqué-drafting committee must be sure to incorporate as much as possible of the Thought of Bonvolio.

Then, since the sub-committee required separate tables, and the others were glad of a little relaxation, they all adjourned to that café, into which Botov had peered at midnight when he saw there Sarret convivially surrounded by his colleagues.

Olim, as LITUNO'S representative, was put on the sub-committee of the communiqué, from which he had withdrawn, feeling that he would be more useful planning with Dunstan Curlew the programme of the next meeting—what should be discussed and, still more, who should be invited.

Marteau and Sarret took over the business of drafting a communiqué which would reconcile a discussion between irreconcilable Easterners and Westerners with the Sarret Doctrine. After an hour of making phrases, all of which burst when thrown from one to the other, like soap bubbles, they seemed to have arrived at a draft. Sarret said: "*Tiens!* Listen attentively! Now I will read it out." He did so. Marteau burst out laughing, and said:"*Mais c'est du pur blah-blah!*"

WHILE CERTAIN soldiers of culture lounged and laughed and made jokes, while others tore to shreds the garment of his Thought, Bonvolio sat alone at a table, staring straight ahead of him, perspiration pouring down his cheeks. The most tragical is the most farcical, and Marteau found it difficult to look at the *pauvre type* without beginning to laugh until the tears threatened also to pour down his own cheeks. Every time he looked at Bonvolio he turned to Alex, at the table adjoining theirs, and said: "You're very, very cruel. Look at poor Bonvolio, look what you have done!"

The final meeting took place after dinner. The communiqué, which had been so much discussed before, and which now bore no resemblance to Bonvolio's ideas, was accepted without discussion, as was the programme and also the list of those to be invited to the next meeting. Suddenly, it seemed pointless to add any more words to the mountain that had piled up during a week. All that was left now was for Bonvolio to remind them that they had with them Olim Asphalt, representative of LITUNO, which so generously had given some material aid to the present meeting. He hoped that Mr. Asphalt would be able to explain to them the conditions in which LITUNO would be able to assist the proposed extended large conference.

In a voice violent with incomprehensible, repressed emotion, Olim Asphalt made a statement whose tone of irony and contempt seemed totally unsuited to his position and, indeed, to what he was saying. It was like a speech of Botov. "LITUNO, I would like you to understand, is an international body guided by considerations brought to bear on its secretariat, of which I am a humble member. The considerations tend in principle, though not necessarily in practice, to promote international cultural relations. The distinction between principle and practice is a vital one to bear in mind, because in practice the

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staff of the secretariat of LITUNO are simply agents administering funds granted them by the trustees. Unlike the distinguished intellectuals here who are held by M. Bonvolio not to represent anything but to have become part of the mystical body of EUROPLUME, I myself, as a member of LITUNO staff, do very decidedly represent certain conditions and interests. I am an administrator pure and simple, I would like those of you to understand this who may still have some lingering regard for me as a writer of a novel. Speaking then purely and simply as LITUNO's representative, I have to point out to you that the only parts of your deliberations which concern me are those which suggest channels through which LITUNO's funds may legitimately be directed without there being any possibility of such expenditure being challenged in two years' time at the next international gathering of the national representatives. I want to make it absolutely clear that I am here not as a person, or a writer even, but as an official. . . ." He really over-emphasised all this, even going so far as to say that officials like himself, who happened once to have been writers, no longer held any interest in literature as such, and he hinted that nothing cured a writer so completely of his love of literature as belonging to an organisation devoted to promoting "international literary relations." He became ramblingly autobiographical, explaining to "those of you who were once my colleagues," that he had (as they all knew) started off wanting to be a writer, but that now he was content simply to support the "cause of literature." He doubted whether he would even be able to write down a sketch of the idea that had occurred to him here in Venice, inspired by their presence, during the past few days. But—and now he looked persistently at Botov, as though the whole of this shaming discourse were for some reason meant for the Hungarian—let no one here imagine that he was in any way a free agent, or that he was in the least to be relied upon, or that, if he offered such advice, it was at all likely to be followed. His own feelings and wishes did not come into it.

AFTER HE had finished, there were sympathetic murmurs—*"Après tout, c'est triste cette histoire de LITUNO," "ce pauvre type, Asphalt," "embêtant,"* etc. Strangely enough, this gave him a ferocious satisfaction. He was staging, in a miniature, symbolic way, the instructive spectacle of Olim Asphalt, a literary reputation, committing *hara-kiri* in front of their eyes. On this strange note, the Conference ended, with very few goodbyes. Olim left the room quickly. Downstairs, he waited a moment, wondering whether Alex would follow him out to offer a kind word, or whether he had disgraced himself too deeply. Alex did not appear. Through the dark he saw Dunstan Curlew, well wrapped in his greatcoat, hands deep in pockets, head bowed, moving as though through a tunnel out of which he would emerge on the other side of the Alps at a meeting of scientists, "genuinely progressive" and constructive. Csongor Botov came out of the portico. He walked up to Olim, shook his hand warmly and with sympathy, with an air of *Ave atque Vale.* "I was glad we met again," he said—and a circle came full. Then he went off alone into the darkness.

IT WAS not late—an hour till midnight and Botov went straight to the place where he had first sighted Carlino. Like magic, the boy was waiting for him. The moment he saw Botov his face brightened with the promise fulfilled and he started off his cheerful chirping, "Gondola! Gondola!" "Gondola! Gondola!" Botov repeated, and then said simply—"Carlino!" The naming of the name lost in the darkness gave him great pleasure. It was a release from so much. "You come out in the gondola with me?" asked Carlino. Botov noted that the "with me" sounded like a special service provided by this particular gondola. This was just what he himself thought it. "Certainly." "Where do you want to go, Signor?" At that he gave his wide, despairing shrug that read —"Anywhere—it isn't important." "The Grand Canal, the Laguna, or the little dark canals?" "All of them. It is my last night." Carlino grinned.

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For the first few moments that he lay in the gondola, his immediate sensation was of nostalgia so strong that he felt he might faint. For some minutes, he forgot Carlino (whom he had certainly planned as hero of this meeting), overwhelmed by the sensation of this most luxurious of forms of propulsion, this seat in a box in a theatre that looks beyond a foreground of roofs on to the stage of the sky. The relaxedness exhausted him, the ease disturbed him, and this was scarcely astonishing, since comfort—the coiled, unnoticed spring even the poorest have when they drink a cup of tea, the cushion without which life is exposed at every moment to the terrible—had become impossible to him as sleep. All he was left with was thoughts acting upon his mind. He saw now that the sensations in poetry which we take for granted as being merely poetry—only words and images—can suddenly become something we crash into, like a traffic accident. When he ceased to be a poet, the banal ideas rhymed away by soft lines, the feelings turned to pleasures, had become literally true. Happiness overhung him like a cliff. He really could have fainted from joy, and deep inside him so that they did not show on his face, tears were pouring like rain.

He had to fight his way beyond sensations to a sustained awareness of what was going on around him—the palaces of the Grand Canal, that hung balconies and ornaments over his eyes like heavy fruit, and which concealed humming behind windows like a tune or a dynamo—conversation, love, intercourse. The windows were laced over with spidery stonework, and against walls and balustrades, spears of reflected light darted up from the canal—the canal that was Grand because, as one approached the Laguna, it opened out a throat acknowledging the open sea.

It alone of Venice was Nature—not theatre—like all those façades with embossed, indented, magic-lanterned walls, turrets and chimneys, gothic slots and trefoils, building up what seemed perilously close to cardboard. With the thrusting forward movement of the gondola, buildings seen from below showed innumerable facets twisting and turning round, like sculpture revolving on a pediment, or like cubist painting.

Venice was an artefact which lay open to destruction with the other remnants of civilisation, his thoughts now angrily said, and Nature would survive, Nature even if there were no life left on the world, and taking one of their frightful plunges into the abysses of reality, they confronted him with the sneering observation—you have lived now to see that *it wasn't Nature that you ever wanted and needed*. If you had wanted Nature, as you used to pretend when you were surrounded by the Bohemian comforts of your impoverished Paris period—the time when you could write what you wanted and love whom you would—if you had wanted mountains, plains, trees, fields, and all living creatures, men and beasts to become the same and single grey herd, then why aren't you happy now? You have all this. For the civilised—Nature is either the unconstructed or the destroyed. In Budapest, it is destruction. Where you come from, Nature is the result of subtracting the virtue from a civilisation.

This was confused, and now he seemed to recover a nagging need to clarify his thought, even to himself. What lack of virtue meant was that governments had discovered a means of constructing a drain down which the quality of living flowed out of the streets into subterranean cellars, leaving above it nothing but the mass-produced, identical patterns of social men living among utilitarian walls. The rhythms were drained out of language, the colour from the houses, the age from wine, the taste from food, the variety from dress, the salt from converse, the daily magic out of things despised like listening to jazz or shop-window-gazing. And after all this had been drained out, what was pumped in was social purpose, will, instructions, propaganda, fear, and suspicion.

"Is the signor comfortable? Shall I put over him another blanket?" *"Va bene, va bene!"* But Carlino must have noticed that

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he had started his twisting and writhing. Like all his other beds, the gondola had become a grill on which he turned and sweated. But now a thought leapt into his mind like a cry—"I am not bourgeois!" He had to think back to what it was answering. Sarret, of course, Sarret who stood over him with a lecturer's wand, pointing the thesis of which he was the illustration—the bourgeois with bohemian background tormented on the rack of dialectic.

But he was not bourgeois. This was a revelation, a certainty! He had discovered in himself the assurance of mutation of his whole being, the assurance that whatever else he might be he was a changed man. He did not wanted to go back to that. He did not want to be comfortable. He had, at last, in his own mind found the way out of the slavery of his former freedom. Crammed, stuffed, deluded, accepted, and accepting, surrounded by his own circle within the wilder circle of all those spiritual and æsthetic wheels revolving inside economic wheels was what his bourgeois life had been. He hated this, but he did not want that. The fatherland of the bourgeois was comfort, his goddess success. But the Budapest he now inhabited was utter discomfort, sleepless unhappiness—and what was his nostalgia? Not for Paris, not for New York, not for Olim Asphalt's London. He longed for some altogether earlier period of history. This thought gave him no satisfaction. It was a relapse into an illness of his past. Golden Age nostalgia. And yet, and yet, his unhappiness was contemporary, that he could say for it, and for him. To be modern, he must cling to this. If he was told he was reactionary—he could answer, "I am unhappy."

What I cling to—his thoughts went on—has been purged of times and places by devils. I have had my home turned into a house where every brick is a flame that could burn my hand, every love rests on a scale where it weighs itself against a fear. Without home, without love, without society, I can claim to be nothing except my own uprooted thoughts. He started laughing—a seizure which sometimes overtook him. I am a spirit. It has taken materialism to prove it. I am a spirit. The only question is, am I a ghost, or am I some eternal existence, driven out of cities and bodies for a period, but waiting to be re-born?

Just as you found—they went on tormenting him—your love of Nature less than you thought—so also what seemed artifice you discovered to be a central passion. Beauty. Beauty. The condition that consoles for all the conditioning. The greenish, scratched shine upon the wall in the irremediably ugly slum! The light that the painter can lift up like a lid, the poet see into, a ladder that leads the eye to heaven. It was this that offered the hunted hope of redemption, when the craftsman made the knife with the carved bone handle. This that got the caveman out of his caves may get the bureaucrat out of his office, the gaoler and the prisoner out of their prison.

The palaces began to fade. Carlino interrupted. "Would you like now to go into the little dark canals?" He said "yes" with absurd gravity of consent, as though at his marriage or his funeral. The affection, the confidence he felt for Carlino did not prevent him toying—fondly almost—with the idea that he was a policeman, also a criminal who might murder him. In a society ruled by murder as the law, there would be happiness in finding a murderer whom one could love, could trust like a doctor who puts you under the anæsthetic.

The gondoliers were secret police and the little dark canals led underground to what passages, what cellars, what. . . . He searched for the third image that would be a climax. That he could do so proved how easily reality could turn back into literature again, into journalism even. He was withdrawing from the real into realism, he would soon be able to give a lecture about the writer divided between his social and his æsthetic conscience, at a literary session, with Borès in the audience. He would be able to argue about Engagement. Yet now he had touched the burning core of reality, he despised the literature which transformed what acted upon you into what was thinkable. He wanted the word to be the object from which you could not get

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away. The fire that freezes the hand that feeds it.

They did now arrive at a canal so dark it seemed like the bottom of a trench. There was no illumination at all the whole length of it; only at the end, where another canal crossed, a lamp shone, hanging between houses, like a great planet with a bluish blaze.

CARLINO had stopped the gondola, which he pulled up against the side of the canal, resting his hand against the wall. Unspeaking, he seemed to be awaiting further orders. Botov, very arrogant with his colleagues, was now entirely preoccupied with humbly considering Carlino's feelings. "Why don't you sit down?" he asked. "Where?" "Sit down here, beside me." He moved to one side, and made room for him. The boy climbed into the seat from his sentinel position at the back of the gondola, and sat down about six inches away from Botov, his head slightly bent in a way that, through the darkness, Botov found simple and touching. The boy had a curious, attentive awareness, not servile, yet docile, respectful in a way that verged on sympathy. He was simply waiting, Botov realised, not expecting anything, not noting or judging, objecting or sneering. He had perhaps a great discretion, as though he regarded every situation that arose with every passenger in his gondola as unique. Botov smiled. They were alone. He knew himself to be a very special case. That, at any rate.

"Are there many gondolas at night?" he inquired. "Not at this time of year. Only five or six going from near the piazza. A great many in the summer." "How many trips do you expect to do on a night such as this?" "Three, four, perhaps five." "What hours do you work?" "From ten till five in the morning."

He answered sensibly, did not seem to find this inquisition strange. When Botov had elicited that there was a dead season between November and March, and that Carlino had a brother and a mother, he himself suddenly felt that some very serious question had been answered which made any further examination irrelevant. The boy's hand lay beside his own on top of the drawn-up blanket. It lay palm upwards, the fingers curled like the edges of the lip of a shell. Botov laid his hand very lightly in this warm, soft vessel, and then withdrawing it said: "Perhaps we should go on." "To the Laguna?" "Yes, to the open water."

The questions he might have asked, he thought, as he lay back again, were about what happened in the little obscure canals, altogether what was Carlino's commerce in the dark of his gondola. By not asking, he had answered some question. He had acquitted the boy and himself, as they emerged again into the lighted thoroughfares.

Carlino asked, "Weren't you with those two I took out last night?" He had little difficulty in making Botov understand he meant Olim Asphalt and Magda Karinthy. Botov had another of his terrific fits of laughter, a series of guttural exclamations that seemed almost to tear him in pieces.

"What is your party? Are you Easter pilgrims?" It might have been simpler to say "yes." The next best answer was perhaps *"poeti,"* so Botov said that. "Oh, *poeti,"* said Carlino, with his air of judging nothing. "Have you written poems about Venice?"

"That would be difficult, there are so many already." Carlino did not follow this up. He remarked, almost at random: "The signor is extremely serious."

As they emerged from under the Bridge of Sighs, into the Laguna, Botov, to show he was not altogether this, clambered up to the stern of the gondola and offered to propel it. Carlino accepted this gaily enough: giving him the oar to hold, and placing his hands over those of Botov to guide him. He sang *Luna Luna* to set the rhythm of the movement. They went out further into the Laguna. Then suddenly Botov felt Carlino grip his body with both arms while he fell over towards the water which rose up to meet him like black thongs.

Carlino had caught him, and settled him down again in the middle of the gondola. For a few moments he had fainted. When he

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revived the boy was much concerned, as though their friendship had gone on a very long time. Indeed, it did seem an eternity since the last meeting of the Conference. Now Carlino kept on asking how he was, and whether he wanted to return. But Botov told him to stay just as they were.

He had recovered from his faint in a strange state of mind, a kind of delirium of happiness. Venice and the Laguna seemed extremely beautiful, the water was as restful as a bed or as strata of stone and soil weaving skeletons under the earth. His mind filled like a cistern with words, not as when he was composing, in his past infinitely fruitful period, but as when, sometimes, in the night, he had half-woken and had the impression that the sides of his body were the banks of a river through which a powerful current flowed, rustling and whispering, bending reeds over, swarming with images and phrases. Now he seemed to lie comfortably at the bottom of a pit with a rectangular opening that looked up at black sky of stars. His grave. Above him, Carlino's towering form seemed a statue, beyond which, in the distance, like a little model at his feet, the two Byzantine columns which supported the statues of St. Teodoro and the lion of St. Mark, with, behind them, the outline of the *campanile*, and the squat, crowded bulbs of San Marco's domes, were all spread neatly on a tray. On the summit of the *campanile*, the statue suddenly broke into gold. Someone had pressed a switch. Drowsily, he asked Carlino whether the flood-lighting was for Easter. "Yes. Always at this time." "Are you a Catholic?" "Yes." "Have you been to Mass on Good Friday?" "When I got home from work I slept for two hours, and then went to Mass." He added: "After that I slept again."

ALTHOUGH BOTOV had lost his faith —all his faiths—Carlino's answer gave him a sensation of his own innocence, as though he were a child again, in church. He started thinking of the incidents of the past day. While Carlino had slept after Mass, Botov had been standing in the vineyard on the island of Torcello. He realised now why he had had the impulse to wander off there among the vines, and why for a moment, when confronted by him, his hostility to the Englishman from LITUNO had melted.

The Englishman, Olim Asphalt, was right in putting into his mind the idea that their meeting would remind him of another meeting, in another vineyard. Yes! Was it two, three, four years ago? They had driven out that afternoon into the caves where, on the shore of Lake Balaton, there was the wine-tasting. The wine was Badacsony. He doubted whether the damned Englishman knew that. Moaschkovitz and Pomgracz were with them . . . alive then. It was true the Englishman had been there, but he flattered himself if this afternoon, on Torcello, he thought it was the memory of his presence that had caused Botov's emotion. The cause was unknown to anyone, unknown even to Pomgracz. It was that he had seen—seen! How seen!—the labourer in the vineyard. It was a glimpse only. They were drunk as they drove past him in the car. The terrace of the vines in which he stood stepped down the slope. Through torn spaces between spear-shaped leaves, the lake glowed with waters combed sideways, and, climbing up to meet the vine-spire vanes, distant mountains painted rocks and trees and snow into a sky of burning glass. Lake below, mountains above, and between the lane of turreted leaves, the human form—the labourer in the vineyard. His dark-tanned trousers formed a pedestal of bark, split, stripped at the navel, peeled to reveal the bare torso of burned sun-god, Apollo carved in wood, breast of lyre, mouth coining song. Through his mere physical existence, he seemed all the eloquence of that day, writing the poem of his silence, his absence, his distance. He focused on to one point the meeting inspirations of remote times. He made the picture of a future without him intolerable as a desert blown up from a dust-bowl. Wanded gods descended into the vineyards, their hands loose-clenched against the wrinkling blue sail of the distant lake. His flesh was filled with statue, as the grapes with wine.

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THERE THE poem was, so clear, so complete, simple as a single line, luminous as that day. It was perfect in his mind, he saw it pure and whole. He knew it as though he had been born with it silver in his mouth, and it would be scrolled within his hollow bones when he died. And yet it was at this exact moment that he realised that the virtue which could enable him to write it had gone out of him. There was no form, no rhythm, only the perfectly clear idea. The rhythm that can no more be defined than the unstated revelation in the shaping of a single letter of handwriting, had gone.

STATUES. Statues. Another idea, thought of, never realised, recurred to him. His essay on Statues. It was a meditation, "amusing" in his style which now seemed to have too much about it of the café, on the fact that statues have no internal organs. The clarified surfaces of Michaelangelo's David conceal nothing inside that contradicts. The inner is primarily unspeakingly consistent with the outside. Within, it contains the forever unawakened, untouched stone of Carrara, without sin or malice, thought or digestion. In myth, of course, it was common to fall in love with statues, and—his essay suggested—perhaps this was not only because they were more beautiful than real beings, but because they were intrinsically self-consistent. What they stated could never betray. Their virtue was all marble. And now, looking up at Carlino, he remembered how an instant ago he had seemed a statue standing there at the end of the gondola, and he saw that his mind had really been led to this thought by the conversation about going to church: the idea of the boy's qualities being of an external virtue that decided his innerliness. When Carlino had said he went to Mass, and that afterwards he slept, this was the speech of the marble sleeping within the outward facing-surface. And there was another thought he could add now about statues. People had been murdered by them—*statua del commendatore*—such a murder was the revenge of daylight marble truth upon the blood-filled intestinal dreaming of malice and vice. The light had its revenge.

POETRY, the essay, how they were re-asserting themselves! It was the first time for months that they had been allowed to do so by the hunting thoughts. Furies. And now in the darkness of the gondola, on the black, shining water, and with the statue Carlino guarding him, he felt woven so deeply into a tissue of unreality that the real emerged at the back of his mind as an action on a stage utterly removed and distant—through the wrong end of a telescope. He saw very clearly what he had been afraid of. He saw he was right to have been afraid. A future exactly certain! It was the daylight truth! He looked down at it now from a height, without being troubled by the image of his fear.

Here it was, then. Premontvian and Cuertan. They would come back from their prisons. Received with flowers and cheers. Greeted in the cafés, the streets, the Writers' meetings. He would not dare look at them. They would dispose of him. In his heart, he must thank them. Praise them. He would have to resign. This would end, for him, he did not know how.

Yet this fear which he had been afraid to look at, he saw now was not the real fear. Saw now what this was. They would not stop at him. They would turn on their gaolers, the powers behind the police. Or if it was not they who turned, then the flowers and cheers would be found to conceal bombs. Others would rise up. The students in the streets would tear down statues. A short, deceiving victory, and then the tanks roll back. Everyone suffer. None help. The prisons harsher. Fools!

Yet, beyond this there was worse, the ultimate fear. Was it the ultimate? He peeled off his fears layer by layer, always thinking this must be the centre of the onion. The last, or the last but one. This. Everything that happened to him for the rest of his life would only uncover his utter desolation, his absolute solitude. He sighed. Rolled over in the gondola. Am I unhappy? Until now he had been alone because of the absence of friends.

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The friend he had betrayed. But now was worse. Now he would be alone because the friend returned. Ladyas Premontvian. He came, they came back, out of their prisons: they would show he had no friends.

Alone! That was not the worst, worse beyond worst. Beyond it lay the worst, the worst of all. This, then! That his name was, under all his shame, necessity! The deepest secret of his utter solitude, that in the world dominated by exigence, he knew himself as necessity, because liberated from exigence. Without him the world would be a bawling emptiness: barracks, banquets, commodities, posters, prisons. This coward that was he, who had no Party, no politics, no friends: knew himself as necessary to existence. Was final with his real death, his real life, had to be re-born. Totally isolated, put aside, and about to be destroyed, here in him it had its last weeping, giggling haven, here in him, under his scent and stays. In total loneliness, this which was he, determined to create, which had the weak, irresistible passion of the seed, had no choice but be re-born. Had secret, hidden power.

Then the sky rocked with bells that filled the universe for Easter. Looking up, Csongor Botov had an absurd, ludicrous vision which caused him this time really to break and crack on that rack of laughter, roar of tears which had been tearing his body. He was in a prison, under the crumbling ruins of a city. Was it the dungeon of the Doges' Palace? Out there, up there in the centre of the sky, through falling walls, he beheld Sarret, naked, bespectacled, cherub, bearing a flag, just above the tower of the *campanile*. Round him unfurled scroll on scroll of the endless writings which wound out of his intestines, words that complained he had been deceived for twenty-five years, words denouncing his deceivers, words even upholding his colleague, Csongor Botov, under the rubble down there, words declaring his support of the victims of the tyrants, words for ever endlessly explaining, complaining, declaiming, dissecting, deriding, sneering, while little jokes broke in the sky all round him like bursts of flame from rockets. But never once finally, simply, did he say: "Excuse me, gentlemen. I was wrong."

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Letter from India

The State of Kerala

WHY WERE the Communists so successful in Kerala? How was it that, out of the 100 seats contested by them, they won 60, while the Congress got only 43 out of 124 and the Praja Socialists just 9 out of 62? A story, perhaps apocryphal, has it that when the report of the States Reorganisation Commission—recommending the removal from the newly-proposed Kerala State of the Tamil-speaking area of what used to be Travancore, and the addition to it of the Malabar area of Madras—was being considered in Delhi, it was pointed out that this would in effect mean giving the Communists control over the state; by taking away the Tamil area from Kerala the Congress would lose an important stronghold, and by adding Malabar to it the Communists would gain one. That, in any case, is precisely what happened. The Central Government which, by refusing in Bombay State to follow the linguistic principle and separate Maharashtra from Gujerat, strengthened the Communists there, by following the linguistic principle in Kerala State strengthened the Communists *there* to an extent that enabled them to come to power.

One of the most prominent advocates of this linguistic state had been the present Communist Chief Minister, Namboodripad. He wrote a book on the subject, following up his previous "History of Malabar," and the acceptance of the idea of a United Kerala was regarded by many as a special triumph for him. There has been much discussion in India during the last few years on the question of language as the basis for the formation of states within the union. It has seemed clear to most thoughtful observers that a real state of internal stability will not be attained until the geographical limits everywhere coincide broadly with the language limits—in other words, until India becomes a true federation of peoples. The most obvious prescription for action was:

What thou must needs do, do betimes
Steep thy necessary acts in graciousness.

The Government of India waited many years. Meanwhile the Communists became more and more closely identified in the public mind with the cause of a United Kerala.

The old princely states of Travancore and Cochin, the principal constitutional elements of present-day Kerala, were the most literate in India. More than half of their people could read and write, one million five hundred thousand children went to school, and the number of students at the universities was over twenty-five thousand. Economically, however, this was one of the most depressed areas in the country. Lack of industrial development made for chronic unemployment among the agriculturists. In pre-Independence times, clashes between the people and the Maharaja's Government had not been infrequent. All these circumstances made Kerala a fitting area for Communist exploitation. The Communist task was made easier by the ineptitude and disunity of the Congress governments that held power for some time, and by the failure of the Congress Party later to support the minority Socialist Party government that took office. So infirm of purpose and lacking in political sense was the Congress Party in the state, that the Central Government —dominated by its own party—had no alternative but to suspend parliamentary government within the state and rule directly through its representative, the Governor.

Considering everything, then, it is by no means surprising that the Communists did so well in the election. Not all, or perhaps even the majority of those who voted for them, agreed with either their political or economic beliefs. But they were tired of the other parties, none of which had proved itself worthwhile in their opinion, and they did not want Governor's rule. And so, hoping for the best, they voted for the Communists, many of whom they knew personally or by reputation to be devoted men, leading austere and simple lives. The Communists, too, made it easy for them. The emphasis in their election speeches was on good government and honest administration, rather than on Communist doctrine, their attacks on the Congress because of its dishonesty and insincerity rather than any ideological shortcomings. Their slogans were

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mostly reformist and practical: not disputing the ideas or policies of the Congress, but insisting rather that it could not be trusted to carry them out. The Communist success should not, however, make one overlook the fact that the Congress actually got more votes than the Communists did—38·2 per cent of the total as against their 36·5 per cent.

WHAT WILL the Communists do with this power they have won? Before attempting to answer, one must consider the nature of the power. It is not of the kind the government of a sovereign state enjoys. It is a limited power, limited by the fact that Kerala is not an independent country but only one unit of a federation with many units, and its government can only exercise such functions and authority as are allotted to the units by the Constitution. Law and order, police, internal administration, agriculture, irrigation, small-scale industry, and all local matters come within the scope of this power. It is by no means insignificant or unimportant. A government intent on making the best use of it could add considerably to the welfare of the people. If it ensured complete honesty at every level of administration, that in itself would make a very great difference. Much improvement could also be brought about in the productivity and life of the agriculturists by proper credit and marketing arrangements. The provision of large-scale employment for the educated would present difficulties in the absence of capital, but by co-operation with the Central Government some progress here would also not be out of the question. In fact, the Kerala government would find no lack of work if it settled down to be a regular reformist government.

Nothing in the origin or previous history of its members prevents it from adopting this rôle. All eleven, except perhaps one, come from the middle-classes, several very definitely from the upper middle-class. They are all comparatively well-educated. Lawyers, writers, professors, trade union officials, it is difficult to find a worker or a peasant among them. Several have graduated to the Communist party through the Congress, and retain effective traces of their past association in the appealing attitudes they can with ease adopt. On the whole, the Cabinet compares favourably in capacity and knowledge with that of most other States in India. Simplicity has been an important key-word in the pronouncements of this Government. And the simplicity they emphasise is the traditional Indian value, the same which Gandhi attempted to enshrine into a habit of life for himself and his followers. The Ministers have reduced their salaries, avoid ostentation in every shape, live austerely, and give up the outward symbols of their dignity such as flags on cars, and police escorts.

There are some signs that this Government may, at least temporarily, limit its ambitions to reform. Thus, some of its emissaries, members of the Central Communist Party, have been visiting capitalists in Bombay and elsewhere, urging them to consider the setting up of new industries in Kerala and offering to discuss terms. But there are also indications that activity of a merely useful nature will not content it, and it must make an attempt to fulfil purely Communist Party aims. Thus, there was the very early proposal that all foreign-owned plantations should be nationalised, which evoked from a Central Government Minister the reply that there could be no nationalisation without payment of proper compensation, that he doubted whether the Kerala Government had the funds to pay it, and that the Central Government, not being satisfied about the wisdom of the action, was not prepared to assist. Thus, too, the more recent suggestion that the wages of workers in industry and government throughout the country should be raised by twenty-five per cent, a suggestion which may be examined by the Central Government, but obviously cannot be accepted in any general form.

THESE, of course, are still early days, and it may seem not only inappropriate but wrong to come to any definite conclusions about the course of action the Communist government of Kerala will pursue. It can, however, be said with some degree of certitude that one of its aims will be so to arrange affairs while in office that it will remain in office as long as possible. It is likely, therefore, that it will avoid any open clash with the Central Government, at least any clash of a sufficiently serious nature to make it probable that the Central Government will be compelled to supersede it. It will press many proposals, sometimes quite hard, but will not insist upon them to the point of forcing a crisis. And it will naturally try and derive all the popularity it can among the voters by giving such proposals the widest publicity. There can be little doubt that by the time the Communist Party has been in office a couple of years, every strategically important position will be held by a sympathiser. The police, especially, will be looked after most carefully, anyone giving the least trouble being combed out on one ground or another. The Judiciary may manage to retain some independence, since the High Court does not come under the State Government, but it is doubtful if the universities or education can remain free. Gradually, more and more pressure will be applied, more and more inducement

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held out, and the result will be conformity, not only in these but in almost all other spheres.

It will have been noticed that nothing is said about its being beaten in the Legislative Assembly, though with the five independents supporting it, its numbers come to only 65 in a house of 126. Its discipline is likely to be so good that there is little probability of any defection, and even for all the other members to vote together against it would be remarkable. What is probable is that in one way or another several of them will have been induced in the next few months, if not to join it, at least to enter into an arrangement for supporting it.

If, however, the President decides to supersede the Communist Government for good and sound reason, after, say, a couple of years, the running of the administration will become extremely difficult, in view of the expedients adopted and precautions taken by it while in power. The Telengana tactics of violence on a much bigger scale may come into operation and extensive military measures may become necessary. For whatever the professions, to expect the underground to remain idle and not to make very good use of so favourable a time as the next two years, would be the height of folly. Few things amuse the Communist élite more than the half-hopeful, half-anxious belief voiced by Congress and Socialist dignitaries that by accepting power under a democratic constitution and by taking the prescribed oaths of office, they have now become a genuine constitutional party, social reformists in fact, determined to play the constitutional game according to its rules and to pay serious attention to parliamentary work and ways. As one of the leaders of the Party declared at a public meeting in Bombay after the Kerala results were known: "Let there be no mistake. Marxism-Leninism is our creed. We are, and will continue to be, Communists. We have not changed." The Communist Party has always two sides, the open and the underground. Its position as the government of the State will enable it to use both to the utmost.*

* Some of the members of the Government have themselves not a little experience of the underground side. K. C. George, for instance, a scion of what *The Hindu* of Madras describes as an aristocratic Christian Syrian family, spent six years, from 1946 to 1952, "underground." Achuta Menon, too, was engaged out of sight in secret work from 1948 to 1952.

THIS, THEN, is the dilemma of Kerala, nay, rather, the dilemma of India. The people of Kerala having given the Communists of Kerala a majority, the Communists had to be permitted to form a government. At the same time there is considerable danger involved in permitting them to be the government. The democratic choice has been made. They are the Government. The question remains, "Must democracy be so democratic that it has to allow its existence to be seriously jeopardised?" The democratic answer is difficult. Perhaps in this case it can be "Yes. Take the risk, but remember the maxim that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance." It becomes then the Government of India's duty to watch closely, carefully, continuously, all the actions of the Kerala Government and of the Communist Party in the Kerala State, open and underground, and not to hesitate to take in good time any steps the situation may demand. It also becomes its duty to see that the people of Kerala have full access to the nature, history, and operations of Communism in its original home and elsewhere. One can hope that neither of these duties will be neglected.

Some questions remain. What is likely to be the effect of a Communist Government in Kerala on other state governments and administrations and on the people of other states? To the extent that the Kerala Government undertakes real reforms and makes its Ministers live according to a code of austerity and avoid all conspicuous consumption, the effect is bound to be good. The governments of other states may well be shamed into emulation. But the Communist Government in Kerala at the same time adds to the stature of the Communists in other parts of the country. Especially in states where they are already in a small minority in the legislature, the administration may become cautious in dealing with them, thus giving them an opportunity of which they can be relied upon to take the fullest advantage. "Who knows," might be the feeling, "the Communists are in power in Kerala, they might come into power here next time. Better be careful, after all, it may be wiser to turn a blind eye sometimes."

The Kerala victory is undoubtedly a disaster. To the growing democracy of India its consequences can be very serious. Yet there is no reason to despair so long as foresight and courage animate Indian governmental thinking and action.

A. D. Gorwala

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LETTERS

"ARNOLD TOYNBEE'S MILLENNIUM"

From the High Commissioner for Australia in Canada

WHETHER Dr. Toynbee's *History* is right or wrong, whether Mr. Trevor-Roper's reaction to it is right or wrong, and whether or not this age is an age of decline, Mr. Trevor-Roper's article in your June number leaves no doubt about a decline in standards. There is a need for a critical appraisal of Toynbee and your readers might expect something of relevance and weight from the Regius Professor of History Designate in the University of Oxford. Mr. Trevor-Roper's article runs to no less than fifteen pages; its distinction is to combine thinness of mind with ill-natured and ill-bred impertinence on a scale that is so unusual as to be striking. This, it can safely be hazarded, is the first time that a Regius Professor of History has given such an exhibition of the upstart. It came as a surprise to more than one that Mr. Trevor-Roper, on whom fame and fortune fell in the easy years of war-time inflation through the lucky assignment to report on Hitler's end, should have been appointed to a Chair hitherto reserved for scholars of authentic achievement, like Powick and Galbraith. After reading this article the surprise is turned into uneasiness about the standards of post-war Oxford.

If Mr. Trevor-Roper is going to use his Chair for pontificating journalistically on the world at large instead of doing historical research, he could do worse than read Mr. Dwight Macdonald's article in your June number for a lesson on one aspect of the civilization we have reached today which dismays more than Dr. Toynbee, as well as for a lesson in writing.

W. R. CROCKER

Ottawa, Canada

BETTER men, and better scholars, than I will doubtless deal effectively with Trevor-Roper's crudely and offensively blasphemous parody of Christianity with which he seeks to attack Arnold Toynbee. In this attack, his attempt to nail the crime recoils instead on the attacker. Perhaps, on second thoughts, better men will leave a blasphemer alone.

In case they do, two points—and two points only—need to be made to show up Trevor-Roper's spleen for what it is. Firstly, he says that Toynbee is uninterested in arts and sciences... in administration and finance. As regards the latter, volume VII of the *Study of History* is almost entirely given over to those subjects; as to the former, it is not possible to turn many pages of the whole work without finding references to artists of many sorts, and their work (and indeed Trevor-Roper, with the typical carelessness of the splenetic, himself quotes one or two of these references in his article), while Science has as many column-inches in the Index to Volumes 7–10 (it is not the index to the whole work, as Trevor-Roper, again inaccurately, states) as has History. It is clear, as to the first point, that Trevor-Roper has never *read* the book whose author he attacks.

The second point is that Trevor-Roper's hate, which he admits, for Toynbee, is because Toynbee is a short-term pessimist (short term as applied to our Western civilisation in the context of the history of mankind). But any true Christian MUST be; for Our Lord promised us entry to His Kingdom in Heaven—He never promised a Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. It can never be wrong for a Christian, therefore, to fear, and indeed prophesy, doom for existing man-made institutions. Trevor-Roper thus discloses himself as a post-Christian, and his hate is the typical hate of the unbeliever for the believer.

ROWLAND BOWEN

RAF Wyton
Hunts

TO THE *Regius Professor of Modern History of Oxford University, after reading a certain article*

•

Abstemious were the Greeks, they never strove
to look so fierce; their muses were sedate
Never obstreperous
....Apollo calmly smiled.
W. S. Landor

•

I hate your tedious trouncings, Trevor-Roper,
Laud's spirit in reverse now dwells in you.
The irreligious inquisitor
Is just as ugly as his opposite.
Not everyone can view things as you wish.
We should be just to faiths that challenge ours,
If not proclaim'd with violence. Why not then
Just leave the gentle Toynbeean with his Mish Mash
Like other curious sects to dwell in peace?
Let those who have a calmer frame of mind
Proclaim the prophet's errors and yourself
Realise that truth is sometimes mixed with falsehood.
From your new eminence, now cultivate
The Erasmian spirit or the Platonists
You wrote so well about some time ago.
What man affirms, his strength; what he denies,
His weakness often. Tedious grows abuse.
Though one without your gifts, I say to you
"Be not so critically negative."
Men such as you, sceptics who thrive on hate
Strengthen the superstitions they abuse.

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As Christian bigots of a former age
Caused infidelity, you, sir, will achieve
The opposite, new bogus faiths will form.
And truth? Who'll think there's such a thing as truth?

NEVILLE MASTERMAN

University College of Swansea

"EMERGENCE FROM CHAOS"

I HAD hoped to see in ENCOUNTER a rather more generous review of Stuart Holroyd's book than that by Mr. Burns Singer in your July issue. I expected that people who had been bitten by *The Outsider* might be excessively shy of *Emergence from Chaos*, and that they would probably take it out of Mr. Holroyd because they had been taken in by Mr. Wilson. But you published a very stern appraisal by Professor Ayer of *The Outsider* so you can have had no similar urge to correct one piece of folly with another.

I have never met Mr. Holroyd: I disagree with nearly all his opinions. But as a statement of a particular point of view his book has many striking merits. It is sincere and readable, and well-informed; though a very young man's book, it is conspicuously free from fanaticism, vulgarity, and arrogance. If Mr. Singer thinks the author lacking in modesty, he must have an odd idea of what modesty is; indeed, when Mr. Singer grumbles about Mr. Holroyd for not diagnosing Walt Whitman's homosexuality, I begin to think Mr. Singer must also have an odd idea of what literary criticism is.

I am far from thinking that Mr. Holroyd's book is faultless, but it is manifestly superior in every way to *The Outsider*, and it makes me feel there is something wrong with the condition of reviewing in London when I compare the fantastically favourable notices that Mr. Wilson received with the carping, mean-spirited, and gratuitously hostile notices Mr. Holroyd has had. Mr. Singer's is only one of several I have seen.

MAURICE CRANSTON

Travellers' Club, S.W.1

SCARLET EMINENCE

MR. MACDIARMID's letter in your May issue must not be allowed to pass, at this juncture, without reproof —reproof for the values implied in it.

On the one hand, Western civilisation (which is meant by his use of the term "Capitalism") is held to be responsible for thousands of deaths daily, which could be avoided. These, we must conclude, could not happen in Russia. Western civilisation is also responsible for the horrors of Kenya, Cyprus, Malaya, and these far exceed the horrors of what happens in the East.

If Mr. MacDiarmid really believes this, one can feel only pity. Mutual recrimination today is of no use, and to point to the horrors of the successive famines in Russia; to the merciless purges of the thirties in Russia; to the deliberate horrors of camps like Vorkuta; to the cynical—and by Soviet admissions, *unnecessary*—treason trials in Bulgaria, Rumania, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, and the Baltic Republics; or to the horrors of Soviet genocide in the Far East and among the minorities—would not affect Mr. MacDiarmid in the least, if he has rejoined the Party at this time. He will be hardened enough, in conscience and resolve, to wade through these and even greater horrors, maintaining the while that "Capitalism" is worse. It will be pointless to indicate the release of Archbishop Makarios; or the arming of Malayans by the Soviets; or the arming of Egypt; pointless, because Mr. MacDiarmid will be less of a "Scarlet Eminence" and more of an "enfant terrible," a political ingénu, an innocent abroad, better kept at home for his own safety, so that he may join and leave the C.P. of his own free will—which he certainly could not do "over there."

We would, in fact, rather he told us how many times he has left the C.P., and what for, rather than how many times he has re-joined it.

If he is not finally to inter himself in his own book, *Scottish Eccentrics*, he should cease lending the support of his conceit to the form of mass-murder inherited from Stalin-Fascism. And if he cares for a definition of that Fascism, here it is: State-Capitalism backed by guns: identical with Hitler's.

Like John Davidson, by whom he claims to have been influenced, unfortunately, he does seem to see, in his own words:

"God, through the wrong end of a telescope."

J. BOTIBOL

HIPPOCAMPUS

SHOULD the poet aspire to scientific accuracy? Hippocampus, the Sea Horse, says Alastair Reid in his poem in April's ENCOUNTER, has

its reputation for staying always upright
in spite of deep waters and turgid seas.

Hippocampus prefers the shallower seas; in any case, the deeps are almost universally calm and undisturbed.

J. C. GILBERT

Gerrards Cross
Buckinghamshire

METAPOLITICS PAST

WHILE NOT disagreeing with any of the factual material contained in Mr. Macdonald's "Politics Past (1)," there are one or two serious matters of judgment with which, as a fellow countryman of his, I should like to disagree. That his article succeeds in establishing that he and his New York friends behaved foolishly in the thirties no one will argue, but his retrospective attitude to this behaviour seems curious. Take for example the passage where, after describing how in a war that cost his country a quarter million lives, he spent his time writing articles and hoping for a "revolutionary situation," he modestly characterises his own and his friends' "special qualities" as "idealism and rationality." Now there were American intellectuals who behaved with idealism and rationality in the thirties but, as his article shows all too well, these are two terms that cannot be applied to the group he is discussing, rather were their special qualities

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gullibility and—at best—amorality. Roughly they based their sympathies with communism either on the conviction that Marxism was a correct theory of society, or, like Mr. Macdonald, their preference was "moral rather than intellectual." In the former case one can only say that anyone who finds dialectical materialism an epistemologically sound and scientifically verified theory of society renounces his claim to rationality. And as for the latter case, anyone who finds Stalin, Trotsky, Yagoda, the Bolshevik Revolution, forced collectivisation, and the Great Purge *morally* preferable to, say, Hoover, Roosevelt, the Depression, and the New Deal is suffering from a serious collapse of standards. Nor does the fact that so many people who consider themselves intellectuals joined him in this behaviour mitigate the charge: collective moral bankruptcy is not a form of idealism.

Apart from autobiographical nostalgia, one wonders quite what the point of such an article is. Presumably he wishes to show that though as a mere adolescent of thirty he was a Trotskyist, etc., he has now grown up. But his remarks do not seem to support this view: "I think anarchism makes more sense today than any other radical philosophy; it's all those Republicans and Democrats that worry me" and "... I now think no one has a duty to interest himself in politics except a politician." These are hardly the view of a responsible, much less idealistic and rational, citizen. One wonders how many of his colleagues among the older generation of New York intelligentsia share his anarchistic quietism. But if the thirties are any augury to their behaviour we have only to wait for the next social metaphysician to come out of Europe with his collection of apocalyptic irrationalia and like a great herd of cattle the intelligentsia will stampede with the first intellectual breeze that blows across Manhattan Island—no doubt with a bellow for their customary rationality and idealism.

JOHN R. SEARLE

Research Lecturer in Philosophy
Christ Church, Oxford

[*Mr. Macdonald replies:*
(1) I have spent my life writing articles, through wars, depressions, and revolutions, because I am a writer and that is my peculiar form of action. (2) Granting our behaviour had its foolish aspects, which my article certainly did not minimise, I think my learned compatriot exaggerates. Capitalism between 1930 and 1945 produced the worst depression and the biggest war in history. It was natural to seek an alternative. Marxian socialism seemed then a not unreasonable one. Intellectually, its "point" is not dialectical materialism—which I agree is full of holes—but the class struggle and the replacing of bourgeois private property by a collective planned economy. Morally, I agree, of course, that Stalinism was far worse than Hooverism or the New Deal, but insist that Trotsky was on a higher plane, about that of Roosevelt and Truman: he butchered the Kronstadt rebels, they needlessly intensified the horrors of World War II. with the "unconditional surrender" policy and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (3) I hope I shall never "grow up" in Mr. Searle's sense. An alternative to capitalism still seems desirable, because I am still profoundly dissatisfied with the *status quo*. Anarchism, for reasons given in part two of my article, appears to me the best alternative among radical philosophies. I admit anarchism is not popular now even among intellectuals, but that is another question.]

LITERARY SEX

MR. FIEDLER'S interesting analysis, in your March issue, of the virtual eclipse of the American heroine prompts me to add that the cult of the masculine, if that is the best way to describe it, continues in various forms in American literature right up to the present. Some fairly obvious examples that occur to me from my own readings are the glorification of the superman by Norris and London; the portraits of the American husband by the underrated Sinclair Lewis in *Main Street* and *Dodsworth* and other novels together with the equally realistic but more terrifying studies of the destruction of decent men by their wives in John O'Hara's *A Rage to Live* and *Ten North Frederick*, not to mention the gentler variations on this theme by John P. Marquand. Agonising, too, is the rejection of Mrs. Jack by "Monk" Webber in Thomas Wolfe's *The Web and the Rock*—indeed, if it were not for the emergence of a school of women writers of the calibre of Edith Wharton and others, one would begin to give up hope that the feminine point of view would ever be tackled by an American author.

The film public has long been accustomed in the cinema to the inability of Hollywood to present love in any terms save those of adolescent fantasy—although recently Mr. Elia Kazan has succeeded in breaking this spell—and since the days of Griffiths, the popular art of the cinema has shared the American writer's dilemma of how to reconcile his desire to idealise his heroines with his instinctive rejection of feminine domination of his life.

J. H. K. LOCKHART

London, W.7

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The Person of the Artist

IT IS one of our strict modern feelings about literature that the mind which makes the work of art ought to be defined only by the work of art itself—that there is something illicit and low, or at least un-literary, about inquiring into the personality of the man whose name is signed to the work. This is quite wrong. No curiosity is more legitimate than that which directs itself upon the connection between the "impersonal" creative mind and the "actual" and "human" person. No question is more justified, or more beautiful, than that which asks how the ordinary human being transcends himself in art. Between Bergotte read by the young Marcel at Combray and Bergotte met at luncheon at the Swanns' there is a shocking difference which we do right to contemplate. And we should fail in humanity if we didn't wonder how it came about that the despicable Monsieur Biche of Madame Verdurin's parties developed into the splendid Elstir.

Among the great modern literary personalities there is none whom it has seemed harder to connect with his work than James Joyce. It was Joyce, of course, who gave us one of the classic formulations of the idea of the artist's impersonality. Stephen Dedalus, in his famous discourse on æsthetics in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, says that "the personality of the artist, at first a cry or a cadence or a mood and then a fluent and lambent narrative, finally refines itself out of existence, impersonalises itself, so to speak." But it is worth noting that the impersonality is covertly transferred from the artist to the person-who-is-the-artist, for three sentences later Stephen says that "the artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his finger nails." The impersonality of the artist is described in quite personal terms—it becomes a personal trait, or a social attitude; it is at once translated, as it were, into "indifference," which the young Joyce expresses by the arrogantly rude gesture of paring the finger nails. And there can be no doubt that Joyce thought of impersonality as a personal trait of his own, and one by which he set great store. Stephen Dedalus cannot be said to *be* Joyce, and much less can the Richard Rowan of *Exiles*; the Joyce critics often remind us of this and they are right. But these two characters do indeed *stand for* Joyce, and they make it plain that "impersonality," expressed by aloofness, irony, and condescension, was an attribute which he cherished. Stephen and Richard have the manner of speaking not in their own persons but as if they were ambassadors representing their sovereign selves at the court of some unpolished nation.

And apparently this was pretty close to the personal manner which Joyce actually used, or aspired to use. The point is but a small one, yet it does stick in the mind that when Stuart Gilbert was writing his commentary on *Ulysses*, Joyce asked him to refer to him as often as he could as Mr. Joyce. It was not impossible for Joyce to "unbend," it was by no means hard for him, especially as he grew older, to be courteous, often in a very sweet way, but most accounts of him lead us to suppose that he never involved his personality easily and naturally and pleasurably with anyone else's. In the preface to his edition of Joyce's letters,* Mr. Gilbert speaks of the authoritativeness of Herbert Gorman's biography, and this authoritativeness we cannot doubt, if only because Gorman wrote with Joyce's consent and help. But Gorman

* *Letters of James Joyce.* Edited by STUART GILBERT. Faber and Faber. 42s.

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is not able to get very far along with the job of literary biographer—he can suggest very little of the connection between the person and the artist. His habit of referring to Joyce in such phrases as "the Irish writer," "the exiled writer," "the Dubliner"—in contexts where this depersonalisation has no special rhetorical intention—suggests that he had great difficulty in thinking of Joyce as really a person. He can make plain the fierce integrity, the heroic dedication and pertinacity, the unremitting single-mindedness. And it is indeed not hard to understand how the man whose temperament is marked by these qualities should be the author of *A Portrait* and *Exiles* and even *Dubliners*. But the more we perceive Joyce's rigorousness, his cultivation of the virtues of defence and attack, the harder it is to see how he could have been the author of one of the most delightful and charming books of the age.

It is time, I think, to use these two suspect words about *Ulysses*. It is time to forget the hard elaborateness of the many devices by which the book proceeds and by which the impersonality of the author is protected, and the solemnity of the ambience in which it has long existed, and to keep chiefly in mind its brilliance, its humour, its warmth, its pathos, its rich sentimentality, its eroticism, its beautiful simplicity of right feeling. Disengage it from our recollection of the battles that were fought over it, from its high status as a cultural symbol, from all the critical ingenuities it asked for and received, and take it with some of the simplicity it deserves. It will then be seen to be one of the kindest books in the world, one of the most loving and most forgiving, and therefore one of the saddest.

SO THERE is the mystery: that *Ulysses* is what it is and that it was James Joyce who wrote it. From Gorman's biography, as I say, we gain no clue, no sense of how the man is related to the artist. But Joyce's letters of forty years do make the connection for us, and in a rather dramatic way.

They are not great letters. They don't support a view I expressed some years ago when I said that "among the letters of great men those of the great creative artists are likely to be the most intimate, the liveliest, and the fullest of wisdom." I said this under the influence of my enthusiasm for Keats's letters, and it is surely an extravagant generalisation. It doesn't hold, for example, for Yeats's letters. And it doesn't hold for Joyce's. They are not remarkable in themselves, or not often. Yet taken in their continuity, they make a biographical document of the highest interest.

They begin with a great flourish, with the famous letter to Ibsen. Joyce is nineteen; the occasion of the letter is Ibsen's seventy-third birthday. There had previously been a kind of communication between the old and the young man—Joyce had published in *The Fortnightly Review* an essay on *When We Dead Awaken* and Ibsen had told William Archer of his pleasure in it; Archer sent word of this to Joyce, who took licence from the message to address his great hero and master. It is really a superb letter—it is meant to be just that, in the literal sense of the word: it was the young man's announcement that he was claiming his birthright, that he was taking his place in the tradition. He speaks of his defiant advocacy of Ibsen's work at his college, and we do not fail to note that what he says he had put forward as Ibsen's "highest excellence" is his "lofty, impersonal power." He is nothing if not pugnacious: "It may annoy you," he says, "to have your works at the mercy of striplings but I am sure you would prefer hot-headedness to nerveless and 'cultured' paradoxes"—it is surely Shaw whom he is challenging. He is quick to protect himself from condescension: "Do not think me a hero-worshipper," he says, "—I am not so. And when I spoke of you in debating societies and so forth, I enforced attention by no futile rantings." He concludes with conscious magnificence:

> But we always keep the dearest things to ourselves. I did not tell them what bound me closest to you. I did not say how what I could discern dimly of your life was my pride to see, how your battles inspired me—not the obvious material battles but those that were fought and won behind your forehead, how your wilful resolution to wrest the secret from life gave me heart and how in your absolute indifference to public canons of art, friends, and shibboleths you walked in the light of your inward heroism. And this is what I write to you of now. Your work on earth draws to a close and you are near the silence. It is growing dark for you. Many write of such things, but they do not know. You have only opened the way—though you have gone as far as you could upon it—to the end of "John

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> Gabriel Borkman" and its spiritual truth—your last play stands, I take it, apart. But I am sure that higher and holier enlightenment lies—onward.
>
> As one of the younger generation for whom you have spoken, I give you greeting—not humbly, because I am obscure and you in the glare, not sadly because you are an old man and I am a young man, not presumptuously or sentimentally—but joyfully, with hope and with love, I give you greeting.

It is very moving, this hail-and-farewell from the young hero to the old hero. It has the right generosity and the right touch of the heroic and tragic cruelty. It has the legendary note that was strangely possible in many artists' conceptions of themselves in the first years of the twentieth century. We listen to it now, when we hear it in the distance of the past, with the curiosity of epigoni; and there are those who hear it with the relieved awareness that this grandiose idea of the life in literature is now done with and forever impossible.

BUT AFTER the first letter the Siegfried call is not to be sounded again. The dedication to art once made, and ritually and grandiosely, the high promises can be fulfilled only by slogging hard work, by dirty details. Joyce was not alone, he demanded help and he got it in one measure or another. Pound and Yeats, Edward Marsh, and H. G. Wells were among the many who undertook to relieve his difficulties or to advance his reputation. By 1917 Harriet Shaw Weaver had begun her generous and tactful financial help. But all the way it was hard going and it needed more than courage—it needed obsession and pertinacity, and shrewdness and even shamelessness. No small peasant proprietor, no shopkeeper could have been more willing than Joyce to scheme and calculate and haggle and do the mean chores. (The famous "secrecy, silence, and cunning" are, we must know, the personal weapons not only of artists and revolutionaries, but also of diplomats, operators, peasants, and shopkeepers.) After reading the letters, it is impossible not to see how deeply involved in class feelings Joyce was—Wyndham Lewis's old accusation that Joyce was forever worried about his gentility or gentlemanliness is perfectly true—and he thought of his genius not only as a sacred spiritual trust but as a

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property, as an investment that had to be made to pay.

I suppose that it can be said that the record of the long bitter enterprise does not show Joyce in an attractive light. He had to fight for his rights with publishers, in long letters stiff with detailed argument and the sense of aggrievement. The story of the battle for the publication of *Dubliners* is well known; it lasted over nine years and Joyce waged it alone. And this, of course, is but the best-known of the occasions given Joyce for angry pertinacity. We can say of Joyce, as Johnson said of Dryden, that "he knew how to complain"; and complaint is, I suppose, not ingratiating. (But he never really complains about the torture of his eyes.) When at last his reputation began to grow, he hovered over it like a hen with one chick—no mention of his name is too unimportant for him to take note of, no word of praise is too small for him to take pleasure in; he can never have enough clippings of reviews, for he likes to send them to correspondents.

And through it all he seems to have attached himself to no one (outside his family) in a personal way: in the early years there is no one to whom he writes in the light and teasing way of friendship, let alone of intimate serious communication. There seems to be no evidence that at this time he had a close friend, and it is hard to see, if we can draw conclusions from his tone, on what terms he would have maintained friendship. The belief which so decisively marks Stephen Dedalus's character, that he is being conspired against and betrayed, is an important part of his creator's character. And even when, as time passed, he did come to write in the way of friendship, his manner is uncertain. Mr. Gilbert, speaking of the letters in their relation to the literary style of *Ulysses*, remarks on "the writer's skill in adjusting their tone, not merely their content, to the personality of his correspondents . . . many of Joyce's letters are masterpieces of epistolary psychology. . . ." Rather too much adjustment, I should say, rather too much psychology. At other times adjustment and psychology quite fail. When he writes to Frank Budgen or Robert MacAlmon with the intention of easy cameraderie, the manner just about comes off, but we can see it being brought off, with undue effort. A letter of condolence to the widow of a boyhood friend is truly kind but hopelessly awkward and embarrassed. What Mr. Gilbert calls "the informative, whimsical, slightly deferent letters to Miss Weaver" make us think that that lady would more than once need all the generosity of spirit she so clearly had, not to feel a little snubbed and condescended to.

YET IT is in a letter to Miss Weaver that there occurs what may be thought of as the beginning of a revision in Joyce's conception of himself, a rather striking expression of ruefulness and self-doubt. The letter was written in 1921, when Joyce was thirty-nine years old, and in it he takes note of the legends about his character that had grown up during his long years of struggle. He lists the extravagant and malicious stories in some detail. "I mention these views," he says, "not to speak about myself but to show you how conflicting they all are. The truth probably is that I am a quite commonplace person undeserving of so much imaginative painting. . . . There is a further opinion that I am a crafty, simulating, and dissimulating Ulysses-like type, a 'jejeune priest,' selfish and cynical. There is some truth in all this, I suppose: but it is by no means all of me (nor was it all of Ulysses) and it has been my habit to apply this alleged quality to safeguard my poor creations."

It is as if he had come to view with some misgivings the "secrecy, silence, and cunning" which his Stephen Hero had invoked. And when once the long enterprise has reached its culmination, when once *Ulysses* has neared the end of its progress, and was known by at least a few to be a great work, the secrecy, silence, and cunning seemed to be no longer necessary and Joyce seems almost consciously to be trying to escape from their habit. The letters from this point on become very much more relaxed, as if by an avowed desire for relaxation, intimacy, and friendliness. In this Joyce does not always succeed—for example, the note in which he thanks Constantine Curran for what would seem to be a magnificent present, an 18th-century painted woodcarving of the arms of the City of Dublin, is almost cold in its gratitude. But in general the personal letters become warm, frequently playful, and, in a degree, self-revealing. I shrink from saying it, it is so much what every newspaper interviewer always seeks to discover and to reassure

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himself by, but the fact is as it is—that the Joyce of these letters was the simplest of men, the most (save the mark!) "human," the most conventional. It was not easy for him to form associations in the world, but the strength of his family associations was enormous and touchingly open. This, I suppose, has long been known of Joyce, but it presents itself to us in the letters with a new force. He never mentions his wife save in a way that suggests his admiration and affection, and the only thing that can make him angry at his daughter is some untoward behaviour to her mother. All references to his son are warm and proud, and when his son marries and has a son of his own, Joyce envelopes the whole family in his affection and in his joy over their familial existence—there is no difficulty at all in connecting the person with the artist of *Finnegans Wake*, that hymn to all recurrences, especially those of the family. His daughter Lucia was stricken by extreme mental illness; it cannot be said that Joyce showed great wisdom in his handling of her case, but his tortured concern for her never abates, and nothing could be more touching than the way he continues to affirm his pride in her and to speak of her talents, and the way he tries in secret to support her fatal pride by gaining for her the public recognition she wanted, for this poor girl's trouble was that she could not possibly compete with her father for the distinction she craved. His aunt Mrs. Murray is a person of the greatest importance to Joyce—all his letters to her are full of interest, especially those in which he writes to her about *Ulysses*, instructing her in the monetary value of the copy he has sent her, adjuring her not to lend it, the book-borrowing habits of Dubliners being what they are, conjuring her to read the *Odyssey* before she begins his book, and if not the whole *Odyssey* then at least Lamb's Tales, and he frets and fusses because she doesn't do what she should.

The death of his father devastates him. It must come as a surprise, and a pleasant one, to anyone who remembers the rough handling Simon Dedalus is given in *A Portrait* and *Ulysses* that Joyce at fifty should be able to write—to T. S. Eliot—of being "very broken down" by the loss of his father. "I . . . was always in correspondence with him," he says. It is interesting to see how the need for loyalty asserts itself even at this moment. It is not only that "[my father] had an intense love for me" but that "I feel that a poor heart which was true and faithful to me is no more." In a letter to Miss Weaver he writes:

> My father had an extraordinary affection for me. He was the silliest man I ever knew and yet cruelly shrewd. He thought and talked of me up to his last breath. I was very fond of him always, being a sinner myself, and even liked his faults. Hundreds of pages and scores of characters in my books came from him. His dry (or rather wet) wit and his expression of face convulsed me often with laughter. When he got the copy I sent him of *Tales Told*, etc. (so they write me), he looked a long time at Brancusi's Portrait of J. J. [this was a quite non-representational design on the cover of the *Shem and Shawn* volume] and finally remarked: Jim has changed more than I thought. I got from him his portraits, a waistcoat, a good tenor voice, and an extravagant licentious disposition (out of which, however, the greater part of any talent I may have springs but, apart from these, something else I cannot define. But if an observer thought of my father and myself and my son too physically, though we are all very different, he could perhaps define it. It is a great consolation to me to have such a good son. His grandfather was very fond of him and kept his photograph beside mine on the mantelpiece.

I LEAVE it to better scholars than myself to say whether Joyce's antagonism to psychoanalysis kept him from observing that his name and Freud's mean the same. And although it may at first seem an odd comparison, the two men were in many respects very like each other. They share the avowedly heroic intention and the ability to wait long for achievement and fame. They share a fierce, isolate pride, and the need for loyalty. They are at one in point of family feeling, especially in the disillusioned attachment to the father. And they share the paradox of being revolutionary in their work and rigorously conventional in their lives, a corollary, no doubt, of their family feeling. Joyce's propriety was really monumental—nothing could be more amusing than his reiterated grievance that the wreath he had ordered sent to George Moore's funeral was not mentioned in the papers, and nothing could be more touching than his saying of Moore, ". . . I hope I be-

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haved toward him during the three or four visits I paid him with the respect due to his age, personality, and achievements." Neither Joyce nor Freud liked the modern in art—Joyce seems to have been quite indifferent to what was being done around him. He apparently knew a large part of *The Waste Land* by heart, but I have the impression that this is the only modern work he honours even by implication. He had no admiration for D. H. Lawrence, and he mentions Proust only to object—not unpleasantly—to Proust's fame as a competitor of his own. He speaks of Picasso only to say how much better than his Picasso's situation is. He is rather put out by a design of Brancusi's used as a decoration for the cover of *Tales of Shem and Shawn*. He speaks of Brancusi as being "something of a fogey like myself"—"But I wish he or Antheil, say, could or would be as explicit as I try to be when people ask me: And what's this here, Guvnor?" His tastes all go backward. Stephen Dedalus's judgment of Byron as the greatest English poet may well have been affirmed to the very end by his creator; the older man does not revise the judgment of the younger that Newman is the greatest writer of English prose. He is delighted when he learns that the universities are taking him seriously. He asks that a copy of *Ulysses* be sent to Professor George Saintsbury—"I am old-fashioned enough to admire him though he may not return the compliment." He speaks with high pleasure of having received from the poet-laureate Robert Bridges a signed copy of *The Testament of Beauty* "with an inscription expressing his full sympathy with what I am doing." He expresses his astonishment at this, yet after all it seems to him but an example of something he has noted of himself: "The rapprochement between myself and very old men is very curious." Very curious—and not so very hard to understand.

Lionel Trilling

ARMS AND THE PROFESSOR

A GLANCE at any railway bookstall's amazing cargo of tunnellers, frogmen, aces, and agents is enough to demonstrate that the British public (like most publics in the Western world) has a keen appetite for war literature. So has the British juvenile, according to a survey of the reading habits of 8,000 boys and girls: "Biggles," who deals with daredevils of the air, is the boys' favourite character, against all comers.

Why then have the academics not shared and moulded this taste, in their academic fashion? They write as well as read detective stories: why do they not write about war? Why do they not think about it?

One answer is that they *do* to some extent. In the last few years there have been some excellent scholarly studies of the Crusades, of the Royal Navy, of Wellington's system of supply. War and society were discussed recently in some admirable Third Programme talks. The man who organised them, Mr. Michael Howard, holds a newly created lectureship in military history at King's College, London. Under the direction of a Cambridge don, J. R. M. Butler, the British official histories of the Second World War have been broadly conceived and capably executed (though at too majestic a pace) by such "professional" military historians as Professor N. H. Gibbs and Mr. John Ehrman. They are a great deal more interesting and ambitious than the fat, four-square, red-coated official volumes that commemorate the First World War, competent though these were in their unyielding way.

But this is not a wholly convincing answer. Few of the studies I have mentioned have been reviewed as fully as they deserved: they have not tempted Sir Harold Nicolson or Mr. Raymond Mortimer to have a go. If Mr. Howard's is a fresh academic post, its appearance is balanced by the *dis*appearance of a similar lectureship that used to exist at Manchester University. The latter post originated, no doubt, in the remote, excited era of Seeley and Mahan and Spenser Wilkinson, when grand strategy threatened to become as socially respectable as the grand piano. Since then, military history as a learned pursuit has been out of favour. From time to time some professor stresses its importance in an article or lecture. Nobody disagrees loudly with him, but nobody is persuaded either. A curious boredom

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supervenes. The bright undergraduate in three years can contrive to read something about almost everything. But does he dip into Clausewitz or Delbrück? I doubt it.

The impulse towards military history seems to be lacking, in our country at least. Perhaps we are stunned by the megaton. Perhaps there has been a loss of nerve among the historians, in that silent ecological contest of the universities in which one species enlarges its domain at the expense of others. The historian has tended to leave military inquiry to the sociologist, the economist, the expert in government and politics. But as yet none of these has shown tremendous activity. We have had some fascinating material —Lord Beaverbrook's *Men and Power*, Cecil Woodham-Smith on the Crimea, Alan Moorehead on the Dardanelles disaster—but not by academics.

WHY? The first and most obvious reason is that war as the general public likes to hear about it is adventure, not very different from Kon-Tiki or the ascent of Everest, and not the kind of stuff that engrosses the scholar. The second reason is that in Britain our army has so long been fragmented into regiments that our tradition of military history is likewise fragmented. There is nothing wrong with regimental histories (a few very good ones have been produced), yet as a genre they do not take us far. Like local newspapers they are naturally parochial and "nice." Out of loyalty they cover up interesting scandals; they are usually cosy, tawny-pipit affairs, life on a front of a thousand yards, revealing mainly in what they do not say. In such books and in other British military publications the emphasis is, too, either technical or antiquarian in a way that excludes all but the devotee. Sabretaches and schupskas are fascinating only if you like that sort of thing; and most people do not, though certainly military costume merits a place in the history of fashion. Campaigns and battlefields can be of absorbing interest, but again they are a specialist enthusiasm. In the absence of the initial desire to learn, the technology of warfare does not grip the average historian, though he is prepared to master details of civilian technology—such as the evolution of cotton spinning, or the rise and fall of the tramway—that might seem equally impenetrable. As a result, the indispensable and unreadable monument of British military history is the vast work of Sir John Fortescue, who set out to tell the whole truth ("the political not less than the military aspect of the Army's history. . . .") but whose narrative despite his best intentions split into innumerable pieces of campaign-analysis interspersed with angry mess-table swipes at the Horse Guards and the civilians.

Fortescue, in other words, lived like the majority of our military historians (with the exception of a handful of brilliant mavericks such as General J. F. C. Fuller) on one side of the great divide. During this century many civilians willy-nilly have been across it. Their move involved a temporary change of citizenship or allegiance; and it is remarkable how thoroughly most of them made the change. But in outward semblance only; exiles at heart, they came back across the range into their own land. Back again, they remembered with distaste the stay among the soldiery (and sailory and aviatory). Yet they forget more than they remembered. The other side of the divide became a dreamland, reentered through all those heroic yarns of the railway bookstall: yarns that deal mainly with the exploits of rare individuals, matters quite peripheral to the colossal, impersonal, dragging engine of war as most of us knew it. Perhaps the regular soldier also experiences this loss of memory, and also consoles himself with a literature which, whatever its other virtues, has little to do with military reality.

What *is* "military reality?" One aspect of it surely is that the divide no longer divides: the civilian and the military no longer stay in separate countries. The relations between them, the problems of who controls whom and how, the balance between military necessity and civil decency: these are questions of moment. More than that: in a historical sense it never has been a divide, the two zones have always been inseparable. If the history of war and preparation for war is seen in a broad enough context, if we can get above the details of cavalry equipment and the naming of parts, of how Tiggy Meecham qualified for his M.C. or how the 1st Battalion nearly won the divisional paper-chase, then military history might provide profound commentaries upon human experience.

Can we soar thus, in Britain? Do we need to: do we want to? Our recent fate has not prompted us so urgently as that of other countries. Instead of a Hitler, or a De Gaulle, or even a MacArthur, we merely have the indiscretions of an Alanbrooke to pore over. Instead of dreadful queries about what went wrong with whole divisions and corps in Korea, we console ourselves over the tidy little epic of the Gloucesters (back to regimental history!) that *we* played our part like true Britons. Or we have the uncomfortable policing interludes in Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus, Suez, whose pattern does not encourage ambitious analysis.

IN America, interestingly if not surprisingly, the situation has changed a lot among the academics. It used to be the same as in England, only more so. Beyond the divide, the American

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military used to keep silent, or slang the civilians (who were not listening). On the hither side, the cismontane mass used to ignore the military, or else slang them in return. There was no common ground, save in indifference; the American official history of the First World War, for example, was a stillborn business of a few pamphlets. (Contrast the multi-volume official enterprise of the second conflict.)

Americans, of course, share with us a blood-and-thunder, drum-and-trumpet, rum-and-strumpet taste for war literature. Their special passion is for the American Civil War; and they are indulging it today to an unprecedented extent. Civil War "buffs" are catered to by a Civil War Book Club, and there is a serious quarterly called *Civil War History*. Mr. Robert A. Lively, whose own book* is in itself a symptom of the craze, can furnish a list of over 500 novels on the Civil War whose plots and attitudes he examines—novels alone, not counting short stories, plays, and poems. The journalists—indifferent writers in the case of a Clifford Dowdey† (who celebrates the lost cause of the Confederacy), almost too skilful for his own good in the case of Bruce Catton‡ (who describes the Union side of the fighting)—are turning their assorted talents to the theme. So, regrettably, are the academics. Mr. Catton, a vivid writer with a gift for narrative, though an indiscriminate lover of high-toned rhetoric, does no harm; indeed, he satisfies a need with the utmost efficiency. Too many academics, however, are re-hashing the Civil War to the neglect of more difficult but more worth-while military topics. Even the accomplished historian John Hope Franklin does not altogether avoid the trap, though with commendable initiative he has sought to write about something else—the "militant South" of duels, volunteer militia, and military schools as it was in the sixty years before the Civil War.¶ Yet his subject is in a way defined and circumscribed by the Civil War, for which he has supplied a sort of lengthy prelude. In fact the Civil War is the great wen of American history as a whole.

But there are signs of a crop of novel military studies in the United States, with Princeton leading the way but with solid contributions from other colleges. One such is Samuel P. Huntington's *The Soldier and the State*.* Mr. Huntington teaches government at Harvard. His is a learned study, excellent in parts and distinctly fishy in others. Indeed his book illustrates the danger to which the academic exposes himself when he pioneers a subject—in this instance "civil-military relations," which is now busting out all over on American campuses. With thoroughness and some ingenuity he works out a theory of civil-military relations; he distinguishes between alternative types of civilian control ("subjective" = bad; "objective" = good); he brings in cautionary tales from the past of Germany and Japan; and he explains in full historical sequence how military professionalism developed in the United States. He shows that the American professionals have always retained a degree of non-military Americanness. The retired generals of recent years have not militarised the corporations whose boards they grace: on the contrary, they have merged perfectly with their 200 per cent civilian colleagues.

So far, splendid. All this was worth saying and had not been properly said before. But it is not the final lesson that Mr. Huntington seeks to impart. His thesis rests on a social-science version of the New Conservatism. He has dug up, after putting it there in the first place, a new American tradition to cherish—the military tradition. In the course of his excavations Mr. Huntington has invented a few subsidiary artifacts: an American "military enlightenment" during the 1830s and 1840s, an ideal American military ethic throughout her history. He winds up with the startling suggestion that "the disciplined order of West Point has more to offer than the garish individualism of Main Street," and with the still wilder opinion that "modern man may well find his monastery in the Army."

The bulk of his book is much better than these notions would indicate. In fact it tacitly contradicts what he advances at the end. The trouble is that instead of surveying the divide impartially, Mr. Huntington has identified himself with the military with the raw zeal of the convert. Yet I do not believe that he really believes in his own argument. Too simple and spectacular, it has the righteous, improvised, "sincere" ring of a *Life*-magazine editorial. A shame, though not, I think, a wicked shame: an error in taste and maturity rather than a piece of black obscurantism.

How pleasant nevertheless to turn from *The Soldier and the State* to *Arms and Men*, by Walter Millis.† This is a first-rate book, original without being bizarre, warm without being

* *Fiction Fights the Civil War*. By Robert A. Lively. University of N. Carolina Press and Oxford University Press. 40s.

† *The Land They Fought For*. By Clifford Dowdey. Doubleday, New York.

‡ *This Hallowed Ground*. By Bruce Catton. Doubleday, $5.95; Gollancz, 16s.

¶ *The Militant South, 1800–1861*. By John Hope Franklin. Harvard and Oxford University Press. 40s.

* Harvard and Oxford University Press. 60s.

† G. P. Putnam's Sons. New York. $5.75.

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fevered, well-written without seeking to cajole us into Armageddon or a monastery. Mr. Millis has done other books on American military history. They were shrewd if a little derisive. He might legitimately have listed them in his bibliography. It is characteristic of this new historical interpretation of his that he does not. He writes now on a higher level of understanding, knowing both sides of the divide but a partisan for neither. Only one point seems questionable in Millis and in some other military historians. Do they not make too much of an article of faith according to which *all* old wars were—in contrast with the total, catastrophic nature of modern wars—neat, reasonable, and decisive? Some of the endemic warfare of ancient, mediæval, and relatively modern times would not seem to bear this out. But that is a minor criticism of what is easily the best account available of America's military evolution. It should serve as a model for students in his own country and in others. One might note, incidentally, that Mr. Millis is a journalist, not a professor. Whatever the moral of that, his book is cheering evidence that military history *can* be the judicious and civilised thing that its advocates have—with such slight proof hitherto—so often postulated.

Marcus Cunliffe

A FOUNDING FATHER

WHEREVER the traveller goes in Israel he is likely to be confronted by an outsize photograph of a man with thick-growing hair swept up over his temples, with glaring eyes, a fine aquiline nose, enormous moustaches and beard reminiscent of ancient Assyria, and sporting the neckwear of the eighteen-nineties. He is the patron saint of the Jewish state, Theodore Herzl. Without him, it is said, the new sovereignty of Israel might never have come into being, though this claim has been contested. The best account of him in English to date is to be found (oddly enough) in the Herzl Memorial Volume published in 1929. Mr. Bein has now written a definitive biography in German which has been translated into American English by Mr. Maurice Samuel.* The result is a valuable account of how the most remarkable, unexpected, and powerful irridentist movement of modern times got under way.

Herzl was typical of late 19th-century Austria, a cultivated bourgeois gentleman on whom his Jewry sat relatively lightly. Relatively, that is to say, by the measure of his later messianic vocation. He was a sensitive man, easily outraged by slights such as he had to endure in the Vienna of Karl Lüge, and as a student he was once involved in a duel on account of an anti-Semitic insult. Students in the German-speaking world have for long made a cult of quarrelsomeness so the matter should not be given too much weight, but such things caused Herzl to think deeply about his faith and his race. It is probably true to say of him as of other men of genius that all his principal ideas were brought to fullness by a process of subconscious brooding.

He would probably have given allegiance to Zionism early in life if he had known that there was such a thing, but until his late thirties he remained in almost total ignorance of his many spiritual predecessors, and of the strong current of nationalist thought and feeling in the Jewish world. The Western community, to which Herzl belonged, provided many of the writers of the Jewish national school but none of the readership. It was in the ghettoes of the vast squalid Russian Empire that the works of Salvador, Hess, and Kalischer were read in the eighties and nineties. In Herzl's world such writers appeared as cranks to the few who knew them. And they *were* cranks. It is difficult for people today to realise what an obscure collection of men these heralds were; nor was obscurity their worst handicap. They could not claim literary distinction. Those of their propagandists who wrote in Western languages wrote dismal stuff: extravagant, obsessional, and "bogus" as only propaganda can be. There was only one truly first-class writer among the early Zionists: Asher Ginsberg, who wrote under the pen-name of Ahad Ha'am. But he wrote in Hebrew, and Herzl did not know Hebrew. Also, he wrote in opposition to the sort of Zionism to which Herzl devoted his life.

This ignorance of the modern origins of Zionism proved no disadvantage to the founder.

* *Theodore Herzl*, a biography by ALEX. BEIN. East and West Library. 37s. 6d.

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When the French anti-Semitism suddenly generated by the Dreyfus Affair brought home to this Jew the dire peril of his nation he could make a formidable plea that was brilliant in its freshness, and he could not have done this with such ease if he had been encumbered by the necessity of associating his ideas with a quantity of inferior literature. Herzl called his plea *Der Judenstaat*. It was published in Vienna early in 1896. It is not a good book. It has been absurdly overpraised by Jewish nationalists. As a piece of literature Herzl's play *The New Ghetto* is probably much more interesting. *Der Judenstaat* reads like a sentimental caricature of H. G. Wells in *Men Like Gods* and suchlike works. But it was written before the advent of Wells and has the latter's exhilarating self-confidence, optimism, and imaginative sense of opportunity. It is easy to understand why the book made such a stir.

MR. BEIN gives an excellent and detailed account of how it came to be written. Herzl was in Paris as correspondent of the *Neue Freie Presse* at the time of the first Dreyfus trial. He was not instantly galvanised into *Der Judenstaat* by that hideous episode: his proposition developed in two stages. First he wrote an "Address to the Rothschilds" containing his Zionism in crude form. It was the private reception of this, not of the manuscript of *Der Judenstaat* as usually said (and as I had supposed before reading this book), which distressed some of his friends but won him the valuable support of Max Nordau. The latter (another bad writer but a well-known one) encouraged him to proceed to the next stage, the writing of the book which led to a self-appraisal by Zionists, the calling of Zionist congresses, and eventually to the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

Herzl was criticised by Weizmann in after years for his endeavours to establish a "National Home" by diplomatic encounters with princes and statesmen. The criticism was harsh and more than unfair since it was precisely by such encounters "at the highest level" rather than by popular agitation that Weizmann himself obtained the Balfour Declaration twenty-one years after the appearance of *Der Judenstaat*. Mr. Bein is extremely interesting on the subject of most of Herzl's court adventures. The latter prove, in a curious way, what Herzl and Weizmann accomplished for the Jews in the psychological sphere. When approaching the German Emperor, Herzl was treated by Bülow, Hohenlohe, and the Kaiser to the sort of jocular rudeness which was thought permissible with Jews in those days and would be unthinkable in similar circumstances today, though Ernie Bevin tried it unsuccessfully on Weizmann. The meetings were without result, although Joseph Chamberlain's offer of land in Kenya came near to altering Jewish destiny. On this subject Mr. Bein is very illuminating. The story is well known of how Chamberlain's offer was rejected by the heroic fidelity to Zion of the Russian Jews (the main sufferers then in anti-Semitism), but it is not generally known that before the "Uganda Episode" was closed the British Government were a prey to second thoughts. This is significant. Great Britain is free of anti-Semitism and the Authorised Version has made many English Protestants friendly to the Jewish people. This has led successive British statesmen and governments into magnanimous gestures towards the Jews. But the feeling is not deep or serious enough to sustain a policy. There are always second thoughts and the Jews easily become the subject of a callous flirtation. This fact explains in large part the tragedy of the Mandate in Palestine. It explains the ambivalence of British politicians of all parties in their views on Israel. It explains why some Jews find in their British opponents worse enemies than the anti-Semites of the Continent. But to return to the book under review.

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Mr. Bein gives a disappointingly brief and over-respectable account of some of the most interesting of Herzl's diplomatic endeavours: the meetings with Russian statesmen and the Pope. Herzl himself gave full records of all these encounters. Many Jews, notably Weizmann, were shocked at Herzl waiting on the Russian ministers, Von Plehve and Witte, at the height of the Russian pogroms, atrocities which were condoned by Witte and were largely the work of Von Plehve. The objections are so obvious that they need not be examined, but what is undeniable from the Jewish point of view is that the visit to Russia was justified by the Zionist enthusiasm it called forth in the "Jewish Pale," especially in Vilna. Nevertheless the reader of Herzl's diary is likely to receive an impression that Von Plehve succeeded in taking in this polished Viennese man of letters. Whether right or wrong the journey certainly proved Herzl's extraordinary moral courage. There was probably nothing more important which needed proving for the sake of Zion.

The meeting with Pius X was one of the strangest episodes in Herzl's career. It makes very entertaining reading in his diary. He does not come out in his best light according to his own account of the conversation, for example in the matter of his foolish pride that he did not kiss the ring. (He evidently did not know that a non-Christian would not be expected to make this act of homage.) But at least he and the Pope had important things to say to each other such as was not always the case in these princely exchanges. It was a fascinating episode but it has never been given prominence in Zionist writing and Mr. Bein follows an unworthy fashion.

THE REAL importance of Herzl's work was that in his diplomacy and the establishment of the Congresses he put Zionism "on the map." At any time before Herzl, Jewish nationalists could go back, could postpone, could try the assimilation idea again. After Herzl this was impossible without profound and often painful rethinking. If the life of that greatly gifted and wrongly forgotten man, Edwin Montagu, is ever written, the extent of the pain may be understood. Montagu found the prospect of divided Jewish loyalties unbearable. He devoted himself to anti-Zionism, but his inability to stop publication of the Balfour Declaration gives the measure of Herzl's achievement. Imagine a Secretary of State, speaking on something he knew more about than any of his colleagues, being unable to sway the scales against a relatively unknown Under-Secretary and a wholly unknown foreign scientist! Only after Herzl was such a turn in events conceivable.

He was not a very sympathetic man. He had the power of commanding absolute loyalty, but Mr. Bein's full record does not give any picture of someone who was also lovable. He wore himself out in toiling for others yet a pompous note of egotism is frequently audible in his wholly justified complainings about the ingratitude and frustration which were set as boulders in his dedicated path. He was a great man, there can be no doubt about that; but Weizmann was a greater. In him rather than in Herzl there was that perfect balance in estimating what was practical and what was ideal, neither betraying the other, in the great project of a renewed Israel, and which enabled Weizmann to achieve what he did.

Ultimately Herzl and Weizmann must be judged on the merits of nationalism. It is the cause of much woe but is an acknowledged necessity. An American may be moved to disapproval by an Israeli counter-attack, but he could not conceive of an American return to the British Empire. The British are not fanatics on the subject, but when British nationalism was threatened with extinction by Germany, ordinary people considered death preferable. It is a

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passion which springs from the deepest instincts. There is a peculiar justice in the idea of Jewish nationalism. When Bernard Shaw (in *St. Joan*) made Lord Warwick derive the term nationalism from the Bible, he showed himself a shaky etymologist but a profound observer of history. Without the Bible there might be no nationalism. The people of the Book have a better right than most to a land to live in, not that this has ever made the matter a simple one.

Christopher Sykes

SEEING, LOVING, AND BEHAVING YOURSELF

THERE'S not much use pretending that I wasn't reading my way through Tolstoy when these novels arrived and that all my reactions to them came as a figuration on the constant bass of my absolute admiration for him. I even caught myself in a vague dream that I had been appointed, in a better world, the Only Tutor to Living Authors of Realistic Novels and that I had to plan (on the sole basis of these five novels) a course of lessons for these five novelists. So I decided to set them straight away to reading Tolstoy. Not, first of all, the novels but the early stories of army life and fighting in the Caucasus, of the Cossacks, of the Sevastopol siege. Then I would ask them to commit to memory the first few pages of his essay on Maupassant—cranky, surely, and a little mad, but beyond all that the sound of the greatest novelist lecturing himself.

The dream may not have been silly after all; nor was my choice of Tolstoy arbitrary or presumptuous. He simply provides the "answer" or *an* answer) to almost all the problems of the contemporary realistic novel. He elucidates what sinks four of these novels, and slightly cripples the fifth. The problems are these (they are recognised as such in the essay on Maupassant and solved on every page of the stories):

1. The author must command a vision and a sensitivity which transcends the limits of one sex, one gender; but he must maintain
2. An intense awareness of human beings as sexual beings. That awareness can be dangerous; therefore,
3. An author must maintain a moral relation between himself and his subject.

Zoë Oldenbourg's novel* is haunted and finally defeated by the first two of these problems. She has taken an essentially touching, even a tragic, story—the love of a second generation Czarist-exile boy for a German-exile Catholic Jewess in Paris in the days just before the last war. (448 pages). She seems to have thought she could express the importance of her subject only in terms of size. There is at least one obviously "right" form for such a story—something lean and spare said in a young, sad, and at times slightly foolish voice. But Mme Oldenbourg chose this vast structure and never managed to join the inner core with the outer shell. She did not even attempt to give—through some panoramic technique—a history of what was happening in the world behind her lovers. All her pages are devoted to them and their families, and only at the end does she refer directly to the horror that has roared all the while in the background. Instead, she gives long descriptions of sunsets, sunrises, and religious ceremonies that are the most untransformed reportage—waves leave little trails of white foam on the sand, sunsets go from reddish to pinkish, religious ceremonies are candlelit and aromatic, just as one had always known they were, nothing more. So what might Tolstoy show Mme Oldenbourg? He might even show her a way to have her huge modern novel *and* to make it work—by realising her characters as physical presences. For all their announced youth and pain and intensity, these lovers are soupy and impalpable. I wondered for a while what the characters looked like; then gradually I stopped caring. The boys especially seemed made, not born; unreal, moulded from outside, always looking handsome or more handsome than before or handsome in spite of something and always far away, but little else. Mme Oldenbourg doesn't seem to know very well what it feels like to be a man; but the thing that worried me most was the thought that this novel, which fails so completely to deal with a stretch of modern life, may force us to return to Mme Oldenbourg's earlier, admired historical novels. And I wonder how they will look under this new light?

Arthur Steuer* has set out to inscribe, within the sealed room of an American military school, a rising spiral of frustration and hatred which explodes into sadism and violence. The more or less usual problems of the American school novel —loneliness, with its flailing or groping attempts at communication and gesture, and the terrors

**The Awakened.* By ZOË OLDENBOURG. Gollancz. 16s.

** The Terrible Swift Sword.* By ARTHUR STEUER. Secker and Warburg. 15s.

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which attend the birth of an awareness of social membership—are all curiously unnoticed here. They lie about at every turn of the story like great islands in a river, and Mr. Steuer steams right past them all to his climax which is the torturing of an innocent boy by his classmates to make him admit suspected murder. But the climax which one had expected to come as a scream or a bellow is strangely silent. The figures rush against one another like bull elephants, and all they give off is silence. That is because there are no real boys in the novel, and *that* is because there is no real sense of sex. There are a good many pimples, broken fingernails, oniony breaths; but apart from one embarrassing Dark-Gods passage:

> His hand dropped involuntarily to his loins. The black shadowed mass of fur, the hairy wound, the glistening dark mass which haunted all his dreams, the wet ghost beckoned him towards its bottomless throat.

and an occasional sentence that hovers on the edge of the abyss:

> Eyes met only momentarily and then looked away as if they had seen their own reflection and found it obscene.

no effort is made to discover or explain the roots of all the horror and pain. The reader watches the ritual torture through thick glass—but so does Mr. Steuer, who might have learned from one sentence of Tolstoy how to re-see his story. The sentence comes in a story called "The Wood-Felling," towards the end of a description of the agonised death of a Russian soldier. The narrator can only watch the man die, but he can also see a thing like this:

> The sight of his bare, white, healthy leg, when his jack-boot had been taken off and the purse untied, produced on me a terribly sad feeling.*

That is one way to make a scene or a whole novel blaze into life. When Tolstoy's soldiers argue or fight or simply sit and eat and sing, they move in charged air. They are seen and felt in every cell by a creator—who contrives to seem only an observer—who can show us with the slightest flick of his eye how he loves these people; and we never wince.

There seems very little love for anything in Albert Camus' *The Fall*,† certainly none for the solitary speaker—an outsider *par excellence* who has exiled himself from Paris to an Amsterdam waterfront bar, who calls himself a judge-penitent, and who issues vast monologues to anyone who will listen. The monologues appear exclusively autobiographical (of the speaker, not M. Camus), though the final point seems to be that the speaker adapts them subtly to his listener in the hope of effecting some sort of self-knowledge, self-judgment. The idea is striking and there are rare moments of insight, but the chosen form has ruined it all. More than a hundred pages of one voice—drugged, colourless, utterly humourless, with no conceivable relation to a human voice—are, in the end, just boring. What one learns—once, and wearily, again—is that the Unforgivable Crime of most Ancient Mariners is boringness. And again, I think, the book fails largely because of its lack of attention to a person. M. Camus has disclaimed, in an epigraph from Lermontov, any intention of portraying a single individual. But that is just it: the only imaginable reason for listening to such a colossal bore would be some sort of attraction to the man himself, as opposed to his voice. But there is no man at all, nothing one could touch in affection or strike in anger, only this voice throwing up like a gluey wave its souvenirs—notes on life collected from journals and the backs of old envelopes and lottery tickets, left on the bleak sand, shapeless and without care.

Physical presence is one thing which Henry de Montherlant* provides in abundance. The descriptions of the act of love in the August heat of French North Africa are as real as anyone could ask for:

> The instant their two bodies touched, they were drenched with sweat. If he merely placed his hand on her thigh, sweat broke out all over the area of contact, just as water does from the sand of the seashore wherever you press. If her head lay in the crook of his arm, when he withdrew his arm, it was quite wet. At the summit of the most exquisite mutual movements their inundated flesh simply squelched, as each spasmodic movement detached surfaces from another.

Through all the badness of the translation, it is a style which sounds, for a while, like hospital charts and laboratory reports. But after I had witnessed three or four such encounters, the clinical tone which had stood between me and the scene seemed to crack; and I began to feel like a boy who had been asked by some sinister older boy to join in a little Peeping Tomism. That may be only a piece of autobiography from me; but I think anyone is called on to ask at such a time, "What exactly is the relation of this author to his characters, and is he himself conscious of that relation?" And if one

* From *Tales of Army Life*. By Leo Tolstoy (translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude). Oxford. pp. 66–67.

† *The Fall*. By Albert Camus. Hamish Hamilton. 10s. 6d.

* *Desert Love*. By Henry de Montherlant. Elek. 15s.

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thinks very much about the stance of M. de Montherlant in regard to the stupid but oddly sympathetic French soldier and that soldier's Arab mistress, one begins to see what Tolstoy meant about moral relations between author and subject. My own answer to the question may be very wrong. In any case, it is a novel worth reading—provided one can get the French text—if only because it puts that enormous question so plainly.

Nor do I feel really safe about Iris Murdoch's *The Sandcastle*.* It is the story of a middle-aged, married schoolmaster who falls in love with a beautiful young woman who has come to paint an old headmaster's portrait; and in many ways the book is like a beautiful deed. So beautiful, so nearly finished, that its central flaw appears only when the novel has ended. As the story went on, in its rather old-fashioned, unaudacious way, I kept thinking that the end would seem "important," that Miss Murdoch with her philosophical training and practice wouldn't dismiss me without some sort of lecture, however muted. But I left the novel, still hoping; and I think my final bewilderment was Miss Murdoch's fault because her novel lacks a clearly defined ethical centre—which doesn't mean that I want her to deliver judgments or give prizes or even commit herself to an ethical system, new or old; only that I think a novel which raises so many questions about action and effect and final responsibility had better offer some firm ground for standing on, somewhere. It is as though Miss Murdoch hesitated about respecting—which may mean loving—any character *too* much, and an author who exercises continuous irony-to-all-sides can set us adrift on the air in no time; and however well-tended the scenery below, we are only human and will soon be calling for a little gravity. That was my one great worry, but it *was* great. In her own honourable way, then, Miss Murdoch may need Tolstoy as much as any of the rest.

* *The Sandcastle*. By Iris Murdoch. Chatto and Windus. 15s.

Reynolds Price

IN BRIEF

Leftover Life to Kill. By Caitlin Thomas. *Putnam.* 18s.

Mrs. Thomas has written a good book—in parts, very good. It is a book that in any circumstances would be called most genuine; in the particular ones, it shows a possibly reckless, cathartic, wholly admirable candour and honesty about—what self? There's the rub. I have the impression that both the Thomases were naïve persons of a kind, for whom social identity is an adventure into unreality; profitable but also frequently disgusting—usually the more profitable, the more disgusting. Mrs. Thomas is brilliantly and intelligently incompetent at playing up (or down) to social expectations of her; and by reason of her intelligence transcends a reasonably anticipated rampaging exhibitionism. Her mind is good, if a little pickled, her wit considerable, and sometimes inspired—when related to her native intuition—and her honour sea-clean through the innumerable risks it evidently has to take. We are familiar with her Lawrencian romanticisms, her apocalyptic and overcharged emotional concern with a fate that time will show to be more circumscribed than she realised. We know, too, the puritan tradition out of which come such colourful, sometimes screeching exercises in "debauchery"—most of it dutiful. We do not know how to place correctly the proper weight of honesty in the expression of a dramatised self. The term "Exhibitionism" does nothing to explain this, and precludes an understanding of the desperate sincerities involved.

The script of the Thomas' lives together was, I imagine, fundamentally composed before they were born, and they spent much of their energy and intelligence in evading its clichés, when they weren't enjoying its benefits. Dylan's anti-intellectualism—sympathetic as anti-British-intellectualism—his over-loaded heart, and the inflammable gases therefrom alcoholed into his mind, were largely payment for the advantages of playing the game. Mrs. Thomas writes that he was "compelled, by himself admitted, to put on an act, to be amusing, to perpetuate the myth of the Enfant Terrible: one of the most damaging myths, and a curse to grow out of. . . ." This is an incomplete description of his sacrifice of intellect, health, and much happiness to the romantic.

Mrs. Thomas' book is almost wholly concerned with her stay on a Mediterranean island shortly after Dylan's death, and with her love affair (still "faithful after her fashion" to the spectral Dylan) with one young Elban, and some lusty difficulties with others. The story is told with a brutal and often unaffected self-disillusionment. Her writing is astonishingly good (I gather I'm in a minority in this opinion; the emphasis has hidden the virtues). More ordered, less middle-classly, over-emphatic, and adjectival, I could imagine a writer of quality emerging; the book is much better, has far more the rasping touch against real life than, for instance, her husband's "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog," etc., which is spoiled by a prettyness that will fade.

Phillip O'Connor

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ABOUT OUR AUTHORS

PETER GAY, in his early 30's, is on the history faculty at Columbia University. He is the author of a study of German Social Democracy (*The Dilemma of Democratic Socialism*) and is now writing a book on 18th-century French thought.

HERBERT PASSIN, born in 1916, was trained as an anthropologist at the Universities of Illinois and Chicago. Before the war, he wrote (in collaboration with John Bennett) a scholarly survey of the food habits of the Mississippi river-boat people. During the war, he was set by the U.S. Army to study Japanese, a language in which he now enjoys a fluency that few other Westerners possess. He has been living in Japan since 1945, aside from brief periods as lecturer at the University of California (Berkeley) and Ohio State. He has published several sociological studies of Japanese and Korean society, including an authoritative report on the workings of the post-war Japanese agrarian reform. He has also contributed some perceptive and less formal reports on Far Eastern affairs to previous issues of ENCOUNTER, the most recent being "A Nation of Readers" in our March issue.

LEOPOLD LABEDZ who edits the column "From the Other Shore," was born in 1920. Circumstances, both in and beyond his control, have conspired to give him a somewhat cosmopolitan background. He was educated in Warsaw, Paris, and Bologna. Spent the first three years of the war in Russia and Soviet Central Asia, living for a while in Bokhara and Samarkand. In 1942 joined the Polish army in the Middle East. Went through the Italian campaign including the battle for Monte Cassino. Came to Britain in 1946. Graduated in sociology at the London School of Economics. Articles published in *The World Today*, *The Review of Politics*, *Le Contrat Social*, and in *Soviet Survey*. Working on a book on Soviet social structure.

Kathleen Nott writes of herself: "Born London, educated London and Oxford. At first wrote nothing but poetry. Later published two novels, two volumes of poetry, and a book of mixed literary and philosophical criticism called *The Emperor's Clothes*, as well as innumerable critical and philosophical essays. Studied philosophy in youth because of a naïve practical interest in how to live but was put off it by (a) her academic tutor who said that "ethics was out," and (b) by the politics and economics of the 'thirties which made her feel guilty and nervous about being a natural liberal humanist—with the result that she forgot about it for years. More recently, irritated by the way that theology —possibly encouraged by some of the more anti-humane developments of philosophy—was usurping the place of a reasonable liberal humanism in letters as well as in life, she wrote *The Emperor's Clothes*. This book was really about poetry and what poetry is about, and attempted to show that it paralleled science and philosophy but was not opposed to or excluded by them. This involved the delivery of some anti-theological brickbats and she was punished for them by being labelled a rationalist of the old school. She hopes to put this right in a book to be called *Backwards-and-forwards from Liberalism*. Is now writing a novel."

FRANCOIS BONDY, who introduces Dionisio Ridruejo's article in this issue, is the editor of our sister review in Paris, PREUVES. He contributed a report on "Young Spain and the Old Régime" to our July 1956 issue.... A. D. GORWALA is a prominent Indian journalist and political commentator, known for his independent and candid opinions. Under the pen-name "Vivek," he is the author of a striking book, *India Without Illusions*.... REYNOLDS PRICE is a Rhodes Scholar at Merton College, Oxford. A collection of his short stories will be published shortly.

THE illustration on this month's cover is by courtesy of Picture Post Library.

ENCOUNTER is published by
Martin Secker & Warburg Ltd.
7 John Street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C.1
for
THE CONGRESS FOR CULTURAL FREEDOM
104 Boulevard Haussmann, Paris 8, France

PRESIDENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
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